

PARTY FIT IN THE U.S. CONGRESS:
THE INTERSECTION OF IDEOLOGY, POLITICAL PARTIES, AND GENDER

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Abstract

Over the past thirty years, two developments have altered the makeup of the U.S. Congress. The first and more widely recognized of these is the rise in partisan polarization. The second has, by contrast, gone largely unnoticed: the number of Democratic women in Congress has increased dramatically while the number of Republican women has barely grown. My dissertation develops a theory of party fit to explain both of these trends. First, I show that patterns of candidate entry contribute to partisan polarization in Congress. Candidate emergence has received little attention in the polarization literature, but I find that liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state legislators are less likely to run for Congress than those at the ideological poles. Second, because Republican women have historically been to the ideological left of their male counterparts, I suggest that the rightward shift of the GOP has had a negative effect on the representation of Republican women. Thus, the focus on party fit enhances our understanding of over-time changes in the ideological and gendered makeup of Congress.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Danielle M. Thomsen is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Government at Cornell University, and she is currently a visiting lecturer at Duke University. She grew up in Huron, South Dakota, home of the world's largest pheasant. She received her undergraduate degree from Minnesota State University in Mankato, MN, in 2007. Her research interests include American politics, political parties, U.S. Congress, and gender and politics. She has an article forthcoming at the *Journal of Politics*, and she has presented papers at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, the Midwest Political Science Association, and the Southern Political Science Association. Her dissertation has received support from the National Science Foundation, the American Association of University Women, and the John L. Senior Chair of American Institutions at Cornell University.

I dedicate my dissertation to my family,
because I love them.

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Chapter 1: The Two-Pronged Story

Over the past thirty years, two developments have fundamentally altered the makeup of the U.S. Congress. The first and more widely recognized of these is the rise in partisan polarization. The Republican and Democratic parties have been lured to the ideological poles, and George Wallace's assessment that "there ain't a dime's worth of difference" between the two is a relic of the past. The second development has, by contrast, gone largely unnoticed: the number of Democratic women has increased dramatically while the number of Republican women has barely grown. Both of these questions are the subjects of analysis here. This is a dissertation that engages with a variety of literatures, and this is a story that weaves together ideology, political parties, and gender and politics. It seeks to unite largely divorced fields under a common theoretical framework and make connections across the political world. The goal is to showcase the many, and oftentimes unexpected, ways in which broader political forces intersect, interact, and ultimately shape the quality of democratic representation.

Part I: The Partisan Representation of Women in Congress

The question "Why are there so few women in politics?" has motivated more than three decades of political science scholarship. The underrepresentation of women in elective office remains as relevant now as it was thirty years ago, particularly in the American context. At the national legislative level, the U.S. is ranked 78th worldwide, with women comprising only 18% of the U.S. House of Representatives (IPU 2012). Although the number of women in Congress has increased over time, the growth rate has stagnated since the early 1990s. The persistent dearth of females in congressional office is especially puzzling in light of the fact that there are

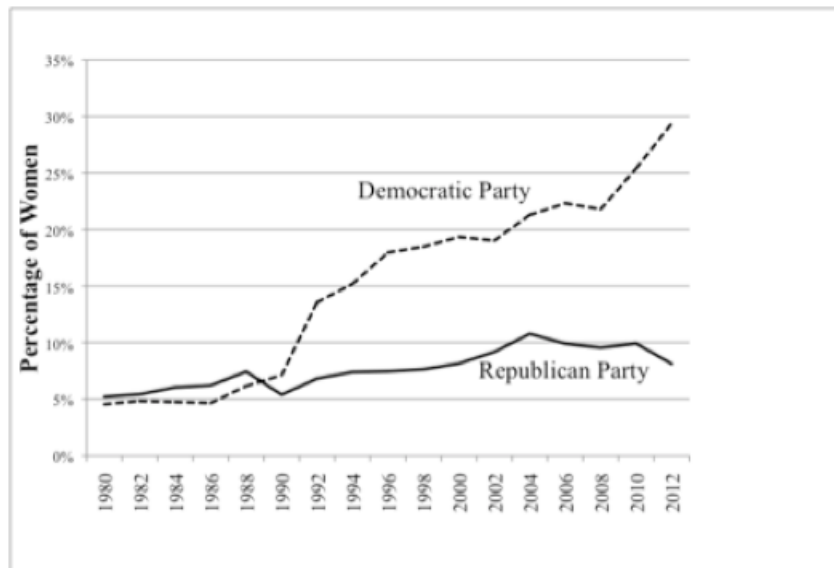
more women engaged in the professional careers traditionally seen as providing the necessary experience and qualifications for political office, such as law, business, and education.

The laggard status of women in American politics stands in stark contrast to levels of female representation cross-nationally. The United States ranks well below the Nordic countries, where women hold approximately 40% of the national legislative seats, but the U.S. also trails behind much of the world. An increasing number of countries use legislative quotas and legal reforms to encourage women's entry into political office, and in fact, half of the world's countries have adopted some form of quota for their national parliament (IDEA 2013). Just to reach the global average of 21.4% (IDEA 2013), the U.S. would have to retain all of its current female members and elect an additional fifteen women to congressional office. Most recently, it has taken five election cycles for the number of women in Congress to increase by such a margin. And this is simply to achieve the global average; gender parity remains much, much further down the road.

The gender disparity in the nation's highest legislative body raises serious questions about the quality of American democracy, and scholars have searched far and wide to uncover a variety of reasons for why there are so few women in elective office. However, over the last thirty years, there has been a complete transformation among women in Congress, and the traditional emphasis on the underrepresentation of women masks a critical feature of this trend. Contemporary patterns of female representation have a distinctly partisan flavor. The number of Democratic women in Congress has increased dramatically since the 1980s, while the number of Republican women has barely grown. Of the 232 Republicans serving in the current 113th House of Representatives, a mere 19, or 8% of the party delegation, are women. The 2010 elections, popularly dubbed the "Year of the Republican Woman," did result in an absolute gain of seven

Republican women in Congress, but as a proportion of their party, the female delegation increased by only 0.3% from the previous 111th Congress. In fact, the percentage of women in the Republican Party has hovered between six and ten percent since the mid-1980s, and the victories of GOP women pale in comparison to those made by women in the Democratic Party. There are now 60 Democratic women in Congress, up from 49 in the last legislative session, and as shown in Figure 1.1 below, the percentage of women in the Democratic Party is six times larger than it was just twenty-five years ago.

Figure 1.1: Women in Congress, By Party (1980-2012)



Source: Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), “Women in the U.S. Congress 2013.”

Women in Congress are now more than three times as likely to be Democrats, but this is a recent development in American politics. Throughout the 1980s, women were as likely to belong to the Republican Party as they were to the Democratic Party. In 1980, 11 Democratic women and 10 Republican women were elected to Congress; in 1984, there were 12 female Democrats and 11 female Republicans; and by 1988, these numbers had only slightly increased

to 16 women on the Democratic side and 13 on the Republican side (CAWP 2013). In 1990, these figures began to split, with the Democrats electing 19 women to Congress and the Republicans electing 9 women. The “Year of the Woman” elections in 1992 led to the first significant jump in women legislators, but it is crucial to note that these gains were primarily isolated within the Democratic Party. The number of Democratic women in Congress increased from 19 to 35, and the percentage of Democratic women in the party doubled from 7 to 14 percent; by contrast, the female Republican delegation saw its numbers rise from 9 to a mere 12. While the 1992 elections undoubtedly gave a huge boost to Democratic women candidates, what is perhaps most striking is that the Democratic Party has seen an increase in the number of women elected to Congress in 7 of the 10 elections since then, and women now make up nearly 30% of the Democratic Party delegation (see Figure 1.1). In other words, to the extent that we are concerned about the dearth of women in office, the story is by and large a Republican one. In fact, if women were represented in the GOP at similar levels as they are in the Democratic Party, there would be 70 women in the Republican caucus, a full 51 more women than there are currently. What is more, the U.S. would move up 42 spots in the global rankings and be placed at 36th worldwide.

One puzzle this dissertation addresses is why the representation of women in Congress has diverged so sharply along partisan lines. What is particularly notable is that this growing partisan disparity has occurred over the same period of time as partisan polarization has increased. While the rise in partisan polarization has been one of the most prominent topics in congressional scholarship for the past decade, this topic has been largely divorced from the gender and politics literature. Similarly, scholars of gender and politics have overwhelmingly pursued party-blind and ideology-neutral theories to explain the dearth of women in politics. Yet

if the Democratic Party is the primary driver behind the advancement of women in politics, we must consider the impact of recent partisan dynamics on female candidates. The broader goal here, then, is to examine how recent changes in partisan polarization matter for the representation of women in congressional office.

Historical Background of Women in Congress

The first woman to serve in Congress was elected nearly one hundred years ago. Jeanette Rankin (R-MT) won her congressional race in 1916, before women even had the right to vote. For the next several decades, however, Congress remained almost exclusively male. The social and political conditions were less than favorable to women's entry into elective office, and politics was deemed a male arena. A Gallup poll conducted in 1945 showed that only 32% of Americans—26% of men and 38% of women—agreed that not enough capable women were holding important government jobs (Erskine 1971, 280). With respect to Congress, results from a 1946 Roper poll demonstrated that 75% of men and 67% of women thought that members of Congress should nearly always be men (Erskine 1971, 280). In fact, many of the women who did serve in congressional office prior to the 1970s were widows of congressmen who died in office.

This first wave of congresswomen was overwhelmingly characterized by the “bereaved widow as placeholder” stereotype. Parties and civic organizations promoted this storyline in order to hold onto the seat and avoid disputes about the proper successor (Kincaid 1978; Palmer and Simon 2008). For instance, the first congressional widow, Mae Ella Nolan (R-CA), was convinced to run for her deceased husband's seat by local civic leaders. She ran and won, served in Congress from 1923 to 1925, and chose not to seek re-election, citing her distaste for political

life (Palmer and Simon 2008). Similarly, in 1938, Elizabeth Gasque (D-SC) was persuaded by local and state party officials to finish her husband's term, and they even covered the filing fee. She captured 96% of the vote but was never sworn into office and did not receive any committee assignments. Gasque returned to South Carolina at the end of her term (Wasniewski 2006). Even so, other women who succeeded their husbands went on to have long careers. Edith Nourse Rogers (R-MA) served 18 terms, from 1925 to 1960, after first winning her husband's seat; Frances Bolton (R-OH) held office for 15 terms, from 1940 to 1969. Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME), who was persuaded by her fatally ill husband to run for his seat, served five terms in the House and went on to serve four terms in the U.S. Senate (Wasniewski 2006).

Perceptions about the frequency of widow's succession are somewhat inflated, but the congressional widow pathway was a widely recognized route to office for female MCs who served prior to the 1970s (Gertzog 1995). This may in part be due to the differential victory rates of widows and non-widows, and particularly at that time. Between 1916 and 1964, 28 of the 32 widows (88%) who were appointed to their husbands' seats won their races, compared to 16% of female non-widows who were victorious (Gertzog 1995). It may be that widows and non-widows were viewed differently in the eyes of the American public as well as party officials, with widows deemed a particularly acceptable woman candidate (see Fox 2014).

Since then, the widow route has been much less common. The 1960s and 1970s resulted in the emergence of a second type of female candidate who "turned her attention from civic volunteerism to politics" (Fox 2014, 193). While roughly half of the female legislators who served in the U.S. House between 1916 and 1964 were widows (Fox 2014), the same is true of only 7.7% of those elected between 1972 and 2006 (Palmer and Simon 2008). The rise of the women's movement and the emergence of females into the pipeline professions of law, business,

and education occurred alongside simultaneous increases in the number of women seeking congressional office. For instance, the number of women running in congressional primaries between 1970 and 1974 went from 42 to 105, and the number of females winning the general election grew from 12 to 18 (Palmer and Simon 2008, 23). These figures continued to grow slowly but steadily for the next two decades.

Whereas congressional widows were assumed to continue their husbands' policy agenda, few of the female members elected in this second phase of candidacies owed their positions to their husbands (Gertzog 1995; Burrell 1994). Moreover, women's issues became part of the political discourse in the 1960s and 1970s, and many of these female legislators saw their gender as politically relevant (Costain 1992). One consequence of this was the establishment of the Congressional Women's Caucus in 1977. The initial policy impact of the Caucus was minimal, perhaps in part because of the shared belief that the Caucus was not intended to be a "disciplined unit trying to forge unanimity on women's issues" (Gertzog 1995, 186).

Although there were ideological differences among women in Congress, these differences were often bridged in pursuit of common policy goals. In a comprehensive analysis of bill sponsorship patterns between the 1960s and the 1980s, Wolbrecht (2000) finds that women in both parties were more likely to cosponsor women's rights legislation than their male counterparts, and there was little difference between Republican and Democratic women in their advocacy of women's rights during this time. This policy activism extended to a range of issues, such as the prohibition of wage discrimination against women, establishment of rape prevention centers, increased support of programs for female business owners, and greater availability of abortion-related services (Wolbrecht 2000, 81). Swers (2002) shows that even into the 103rd and 104th Congresses (1993-96), Democratic and moderate Republican congresswomen were more

supportive of women's issues than their male co-partisans. Female MCs devoted more attention to and focused more of their resources on issues like breast cancer research, violence against women, and child-care tax credits. Similarly, Swers (2002) finds that moderate Republican women in the 104th Congress sought to temper their party's proposals on welfare reform by offering amendments to expand child-care enforcement.

The trajectories of women in Congress began to diverge in the early 1990s. As discussed above, the 1992 "Year of the Woman" Elections resulted in a large increase in the number of female members of Congress, but most of these gains were made on the Democratic side. There have been a few high profile GOP women who have received extensive attention in the media, but in general, conservative women legislators are an anomaly in the policymaking process, and the percentage of Republican women in Congress has barely grown since the 1980s. On the Democratic side, the percentage of women has increased steadily during this time, and female Democrats have also managed to move their way up the leadership ladder. Nancy Pelosi reached new heights as the former Speaker of the House and current minority leader, and when the Democrats held the majority in the 110th (2007-09) and 111th Congress (2009-11), there were four and three House committees, respectively, chaired by women. By comparison, in the current Republican-led House, only one of the 21 committee chairmanships is held by a woman. Candice Miller (R-MI) was selected to chair the lower-tier House Administration committee, yet even that assignment came days after the first 19 positions had all been doled out to men.

What these figures conceal is how the ideological profile of Republican women in particular has changed over time as well. In the 1980s and 1990s, GOP women were a moderate faction in their party, and many were stalwart leaders on a variety of policy issues, including, but not limited to, women's issues. Nancy Johnson (R-CT), for example, was the first Republican

woman named to the powerful Ways and Means Committee. Sue Kelly (R-NY) served on the Financial Services Committee for more than a decade and eventually became a subcommittee chair. These moderate Republican women were part of a highly influential group of swing voters during that time. The number of ideological centrists in Congress was much larger in the 1980s and early 1990s, and as a result, they were able to have a sizeable policy impact.

Moderate Republicans mainly from the Northeast and the Midwest banded together on a wide range of issues such as environmental regulation, labor protection, and reproductive rights. The coalition of moderate Republican women (and men) was also cohesive enough to put pressure on the party leadership and wield control over the legislative agenda. They worked from behind the scenes to shape and adjust policies before they came to the floor, and they were an essential part of the process of legislating and governing. Thus, these moderate Republican women mattered not only for levels of female representation in Congress, but also for the day-to-day operations of Congress and the nature and scope of policy outcomes.

Over the last twenty years, however, there has been a complete makeover of women in the GOP caucus. Of the 19 Republican women currently serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, only two of them—Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL) and Kay Granger (TX)—have been in Congress since before 2000. Virtually all of the Republican women who served in the 1980s and 1990s have, either by choice or by force, left congressional politics, and the moderates of yesterday have been replaced by the Michele Bachmanns (MN) and Marsha Blackburns (TN) of today. GOP women are now very ideologically conservative, and they are mirror images of the Paul Ryans (WI) and Eric Cantors (VA) that now dominate the party caucus (Frederick 2009). In terms of policy, the new cadre of women that has emerged on the Republican side is

inclined to instead address women's issues from a traditional and conservative perspective (Dodson 2006; Evans 2005; Swers 2002).

This third phase of female candidates has resulted in the election of women who are first and foremost partisans. Whereas the ideological distance between female MCs used to be smaller than it was for male members throughout much of the 1980s, the distance between women in Congress now exceeds that between male MCs (Frederick 2009). In fact, over the last twenty years, the ideological gulf between Democratic and Republican women in Congress has increased after nearly each election cycle. This is due to both the increasing conservatism of female Republican MCs and, to a lesser extent, the increasing liberalism of female Democratic MCs. These aggregate trends have been spurred by the election of new female candidates who, like their male co-partisans, come from the ideological poles, as well as the retirement and defeat of moderate women on both sides of the aisle, particularly moderate Republican women.

These distinct periods of female candidacies highlight the ways in which the larger social and political context matter for the representation of women in office. The congressional widow route, despite being somewhat overstated, was a common pathway to office in the mid-twentieth century, which was in part due to prevailing attitudes toward the role of women in politics. The women's movement and the integration of feminist issues into the political agenda resulted in the election of female officeholders who were more liberal than their male counterparts and especially active on women's policy issues. Lastly, in the midst of rising partisan polarization and heightened levels of party loyalty, women in the contemporary Congress are, like their male co-partisans, first and foremost members of their respective party caucus.

Part II: The Rise in Partisan Polarization in Congress

The number of ideological moderates, male and female alike, has plummeted over the past three decades (e.g., Fleisher and Bond 2004; Poole and Rosenthal 2007). In the 1980s, 22% of Republicans in Congress were either ideologically moderate or liberal.¹ In the 1990s, a mere 8% of Republicans were moderate or liberal, and by the 2000s, the percentage of non-conservative members in the Republican Party delegation decreased to barely 1%. Trends are similar, though not quite as stark, for the Democratic Party. In the 1980s, 26% of Democrats in Congress cast moderate or conservative votes; by the 1990s, the percentage of non-liberal Democratic members decreased to 18%. In the 2000s, only 9% of the Democratic Party delegation can be classified as ideologically moderate or conservative. As congressional moderates were either replaced by those with more extreme ideological preferences or increasingly pressured to toe the party line, the Republican and Democratic delegations have become more homogeneous internally and more ideologically distant from each other (Rohde 1991; Aldrich 1995, 2011; Aldrich and Rohde 2001).

These shifts in Congress have been gradual, initially fueled by certain electoral outcomes and then solidifying in subsequent legislative sessions. In the 1960s, the Democratic caucus was deeply divided along regional lines, primarily between liberal northerners and conservative southerners. Because of the seniority system, however, Southern Democrats were the chairs of the most prominent House committees, and their conservative policy preferences dominated the legislative agenda. Liberal Democrats were frustrated by their inability to pursue their policy goals, and they formed the Democratic Study Group (DSG) to collectively discuss their ideas for organizational reform. By the 1970s, the liberal contingent of the Democratic Party had expanded, particularly due to the victories of a large cohort of liberal Democrats in the 1974

¹ I used the method outlined by Fleisher and Bond (2004) to calculate these percentages.

elections (Rohde 1991). With an increasingly homogeneous party membership, leaders of the DSG were able to initiate a series of actions that would shift the balance of power away from committee chairs and toward its rank-and-file party members and the party leadership (Rohde 1991; Aldrich 1995; Aldrich and Rohde 2001).

The Republican Party experienced its own, equally profound changes over this time period, some of which stemmed from these transformations in the Democratic Party and some of which occurred independently of them. The Republican Party had long endured as the minority party, with Democrats holding the majority of House seats from 1955 to 1995, and Republicans evolved into a “professional minority” that settled for modest adjustments in policies proposed by the Democrats (Rohde 1991). For the first two decades, this strategy was satisfactory, particularly because southern Democratic committee chairs were sympathetic to a more conservative policy agenda. However, as the Democratic Party became more homogeneous, the balance of power was shifted away from these conservative committee barons and toward the rank-and-file party membership and its leaders, both of which held more liberal policy preferences. Party leaders had new tools to advance their legislative goals, and the Democratic majority used restrictive rules that seriously limited the ability of the Republican Party to influence legislation (Binder 1997; Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008). Republicans became increasingly upset by their inability to participate in the policymaking process, and after a handful of confrontations between the parties, they began to voice their anger publicly on the House floor (Rohde 1991).

These frustrated Republicans gained additional party support when activist conservatives won several key elections in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1983, a cohort of “conservative populists” organized a group called the Conservative Opportunity Society (COS), with Newt

Gingrich serving as chair (Rohde 1991). Instead of accepting their status as a permanent minority, their ultimate goal was to elect a Republican majority to the House and thereby control the legislative agenda. Unlike their senior Republican counterparts at the time, they pursued a strategy to combat, rather than compromise with, the Democratic majority (Rohde 1991; Sinclair 2006). The changing activist base of the Republican Party contributed to this conservative coloring of the Republican Party, but party leaders like Gingrich were also very influential in publicizing the intensified partisan discord in Congress. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, Republicans mounted a heavy media campaign to discredit the Democrats with the public, involving figures like Rush Limbaugh to help them advance their policy agenda (Sinclair 2006). Party leaders also became more involved in elections through recruiting and advising challengers and by packaging the Contract with America message that would eventually contribute to their successes (Sinclair 2006).

In 1994, Republicans efforts came to fruition. After forty years in the minority, the Republican Party won control of the House. During the 1980s and early 1990s, Republicans had already begun to modify their rules in similar ways as the Democrats, diverting power away from committee leaders and investing more power in the party leadership (Sinclair 2006). But when Newt Gingrich was elected Speaker of the 104th Congress, he exercised authority that went even beyond the rules of the party conference. Because of his influential role in securing a House majority, Gingrich had high levels of support within the Republican caucus. He appointed committee chairs himself, bypassing seniority in several cases, and the party established a rule that would subject committee and subcommittee chairs to a limit of three terms (Sinclair 2006). Like the Democrats, the Republican Party relied on restrictive rules to advance their policy

agenda, setting time limits on committee debate and even circumventing committees altogether if legislation was stymied there (Sinclair 2006).

Since the mid-1990s, the Republicans and Democrats have created complex and elaborate organizations, expanding their whip systems and bringing together rank-and-file members under a unified party umbrella. Members now spend most of their time in contact with fellow party members, rather than with those in the opposition party. Both parties invest large amounts of power with their party leadership, as it facilitates policymaking and furthers their collective goals. Thus, the policymaking process is almost completely structured along partisan lines; Republicans and Democrats oppose each other both in committee and on the floor, and straight party-line votes are the norm rather than the exception (Sinclair 2006; Lee 2009). If members choose to defect from the party line, they can expect to be punished for their actions and denied party rewards. The case of former representative Marge Roukema, a moderate Republican from New Jersey, is a classic example of the sticks that are increasingly used by party leaders. At the opening of 107th Congress, party leaders passed over Roukema and chose a less senior Republican to serve as chair of the Banking Committee. Her junior colleague who was awarded the position was, however, more loyal to the party, more conservative in his preferences, and more active in raising money and campaigning for the party (Theriault 2008).

In sum, as these electoral and institutional changes have taken hold, partisan polarization has become a vicious cycle: the sorting of constituencies created a polarized legislative process, which in turn has promoted the further partisan sorting of constituencies (Theriault 2008). As the preferences of constituencies and their members aligned, fewer and fewer members of Congress were cross-pressured between the interests of their constituencies and the interests of their party, and members became increasingly willing to cede power to their party leadership

(Aldrich and Rohde 2001). Even those in the ideological middle exhibited disproportionately large increases in party unity in the 1980s and 1990s (Roberts and Smith 2003). Such party homogeneity supplied the leadership with more tools to foster party discipline and advance the party's agenda (Rohde 1991). Newly empowered party leaders assumed greater responsibility in allocating committee assignments, setting the legislative agenda, and structuring debate on the House floor (e.g., Sinclair 2006; Cox and McCubbins 2005; Binder 1997; Schickler 2001). In particular, majority party leaders drew extensively on legislative procedure to exert their will, effectively shutting out the minority from the policymaking process. This resulting polarization on procedural issues has further exacerbated the disparity between the two parties (Roberts and Smith 2003; Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008).

It should be evident from this discussion that scholars have focused on two main types of explanations for the decline of moderates in Congress. The first set of explanations highlights various ideological shifts in the electorate, such as changes in the electoral bases of the two parties (e.g., Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Fleisher and Bond 2004; Stonecash et al. 2003), the ideological sorting of voters (Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2009), increasing extremism of party activists (Fiorina et al. 2006; Layman and Carsey 2002; Layman et al. 2010; Theriault 2008), and depending on their vantage point, the polarization of the voting public (Abramowitz 2010; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008). The other set of explanations for the decline in moderates instead highlights the various processes internal to Congress described above, such as the ability and willingness of party leaders to use congressional procedures to advance the party's agenda.

While mass-level and institutional-level explanations have helped us to better understand the origins of partisan polarization, it is less clear how well they can explain why polarization is

growing with each election cycle. More recently, scholars have begun to test whether the electoral mechanisms that are assumed to be causing polarization are in fact causing polarization. While journalists and pundits have all but convinced the public that gerrymandering and party primaries are the causes of polarization, the empirical evidence to support this claim is seriously lacking (e.g., Hirano et al. 2010; McCarty et al. 2009; McGhee et al. 2013). We are still searching for reasons as to why the distance between the parties has continued to widen. What is clear, however, is that newly elected congressional candidates are coming increasingly from the ideological extremes.

Partisan polarization has been perhaps the most prominent topic in congressional scholarship for the past decade, but it has been largely divorced from research on gender and politics. One reason for this may be that while political ambition and candidate emergence have become the focal point of the women and politics literature, the polarization literature has for the most part avoided the subject. This may be due in large part to previous data limitations, but regardless, the repeated null findings around gerrymandering and party primaries compel a deeper exploration into the specific mechanisms that reinforce patterns of polarization. We know that replacement processes are the main driver behind the rise in polarization, but we know little about why these replacements are more extreme than their predecessors or why a new cohort of moderates has not emerged on the congressional stage. Scholars must begin to explore how patterns of candidate self-selection contribute to these trends, and increased attention to the candidate emergence stage may shed additional light on the polarization puzzle.

Similarly, the gender and politics subfield could benefit by analyzing how partisan polarization matters for recent patterns of women's representation. The relative absence of ideology from the gender literature is even more surprising in light of the growing partisan gap

among women in Congress and the dramatic shifts in the ideological profiles of female Democratic and, especially, female Republican MCs. Scholars have long been concerned with the underrepresentation of women in politics, but the divergent paths of Democratic and Republican women compel us to examine the partisan representation of women in politics. This brings us back to Part One.

Leading Explanations for Women's Underrepresentation

There are three main types of explanations for why women are underrepresented in politics. For the most part, they are either party-blind or party-neutral, and little attention has been paid to how changes in the partisan context matter for patterns of female representation. The earliest gender and politics research explored how structural forces affected the emergence of women in office. Scholars cited the incumbency advantage and the limited number of women in the political pipeline as examples of structural barriers that hindered women candidates (e.g., Burrell 1994; Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Duerst-Lahti 1998; Palmer and Simon 2008). The expectation was that as women entered the pipeline professions and ran as incumbents, the percentage of women in elective office would increase. Voter biases were shown to be largely obsolete, and the mantra that guided gender research in the 1990s touted that when women run for office, they win at equal rates as men (Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997).

When the number of women in politics instead seemed to plateau, scholars directed their attention to the decision to run for office and discovered gender differences in political ambition. Lawless and Fox (2005, 2010) are the pioneers in this area. Drawing on multiple waves of data from men and women in the candidate eligibility pool, they find that women are less likely to consider running for office than their male counterparts. In a recent article, the authors report

political ambition along party lines, and somewhat surprisingly, their data suggest that Republican and Democratic women do not have vastly different levels of ambition. They are equally likely to self-assess as very qualified to run for office (20%), and in fact, Democratic women are slightly more likely than Republican women to consider themselves to be not at all qualified (12% of Democrats; 10% of Republicans) (Fox and Lawless 2011, 64).

Nevertheless, the partisan makeup of the congressional pipeline has changed in similar ways as Congress, with the number of Democratic women in state legislatures increasing and the number of Republican women slightly decreasing. We might therefore expect to see partisan differences in women in Congress despite the fact that Democratic and Republican women have equal levels of ambition. But if we wanted to apply ambition theory to explore the partisan imbalance of women in state legislatures, we would have to posit an increase in ambition among Democratic women given that the number of women in the electorate identifying as Democrats has remained relatively constant during this time (Kaufman and Petrocik 1999; Norrander 1999; Carroll 2006; Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008; Norrander 2008). Ambition theory is silent on over-time changes in partisan patterns of women's representation, however.

Two broader concerns arise when using the ambition argument to understand patterns of female representation in Congress. First, it fails to account for variation in political ambition across women. To be sure, this question is well beyond the scope of their analysis, as Lawless and Fox are trying to explain the general plateau of women in politics. Still, the emphasis on the negative gender coefficient has come at the expense of understanding when that coefficient can be insignificant or even positive. A second and related point is that ambition theory, at least as conceptualized within gender and politics, provides little insight into why the number of women candidates changes over time and across political contexts. The number of women candidates

always pales in comparison to the number of men, but it is important to note that these figures do not remain constant between the two parties or across election cycles.

The third explanation for why there are so few women in elective office posits a role for political parties. Comparativists have long shown that leftist parties have higher percentages of women in office (e.g., Caul 1999; Kittilson 2006).² In the American context, by contrast, the bulk of this scholarship is party-neutral (but see Elder 2012, Freeman 1987, Sanbonmatsu 2002), and the main argument is that both parties exclude women through recruitment and gate-keeping processes. Party leaders fail to recruit women candidates as often as they recruit men, and they screen ambitious women out of seats they believe women cannot win (Fox and Lawless 2010; Niven 1998; Sanbonmatsu 2006). Sanbonmatsu (2002) and scholars affiliated with the Center for American Women and Politics were among the first to disaggregate women by party and explore the paths to state legislative office for Republican and Democratic women, though the CAWP study showed that the role of the parties was similar for Republican and Democratic women legislators (Sanbonmatsu et al. 2009; Sanbonmatsu 2010). More generally, partisan explanations tend to rely on data at the state and local level, but evidence for gendered recruitment and gate-keeping efforts in congressional races is sparser. Burrell (1994, 99) even argues that, at the congressional level, “party organizations are no longer negative ‘gatekeepers’ for women candidates. Rather they have become positive forces.” It is thus not clear whether

² An increasing number of parties have adopted gender quotas, and in fact, half of the countries of the world now use some type of electoral quota for their parliament (IDEA 2013). Because of this, most center-right and conservative parties have higher levels of female representation than the Republican Party. For example, in the United Kingdom, Germany, and Sweden, women constitute between one-fourth and one-third of the conservative and center-right parties. These figures are significantly greater than the 8% of women in the GOP, and they actually resemble the level of women in the Democratic Party. This suggests that legislative quotas and electoral systems matter in important ways, but it is also illustrative of the fact that conservative ideology is not incompatible with women’s representation.

party recruitment and gate-keeping mechanisms hinder women from running for Congress or how the two parties differentially affect women's candidacies.

A handful of scholars have offered party-specific explanations for the partisan gap that has emerged at the state legislative level. The trend looks similar to that in Congress, with the number of Democratic women increasing and the number of Republican women declining slightly. This is especially relevant given that the state legislature is a stepping-stone to congressional office. In an analysis of women's representation within the two parties across 49 state legislatures, Elder (2012) suggests that the distinct party cultures foster the representation of Democratic women and inhibit the representation of Republican women (see also Freeman 1987). The model includes both mass-level and elite-level variables, and she finds that increasing voter Republicanism and strength of the Christian Right across states leads to lower levels of female Republican state legislators. Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) also examine over-time changes in the percentage of Republican and Democratic women in state legislative parties. They argue that Republican women have been disproportionately affected by the rightward shift of the Republican Party because they are more likely to be ideological moderates (see also Thomsen 2011, 2012). In both studies, however, the specific mechanisms behind this growing partisan disparity remain unexplored, and it is unclear whether it is due to differential patterns of candidate entry, differential patterns of voter support, or differential patterns of retirement. As such, even these party-specific explanations fail to account for within-party variation across women—for example, why some women run for office and others do not, and why party leaders might recruit some women and not others.

In sum, our leading explanations for why there are so few women in politics offer partial explanations for the partisan imbalance of women in Congress, but there are important gaps in

these accounts as well. The predictions of the earliest structural arguments coincide with the increasing number of Democratic women, but they fail to explain the stagnation of women on the Republican side. The political ambition explanation is helpful for understanding the general plateau of women in Congress, but if we want to understand historical and partisan variation in the number of women holding congressional office, it is vital that our theories can account for the changing political context. Finally, although partisan accounts provide insight into how parties can influence candidate emergence, they do not make specific predictions about why recruitment and gate-keeping efforts may vary across, and particularly within, the two parties.

Supply-Side and Demand-Side Explanations

There are two additional empirical explanations that may account for this growing partisan disparity. A supply-side argument is that this trend mirrors changes in the electorate. Indeed, there has been a persistent gender gap in the public since 1980, with women more likely to identify as Democrats (Box-Steffensmeier et al. 2004). However, the partisan gap among women in Congress dwarfs that among women in the electorate: Democratic women have comprised between two-thirds and three-fourths of the women in Congress since the 1990s, while the partisan gap among women voters has ranged from 3% to 16% in presidential elections during this time. Nor has the partisan gap among women in the electorate continued to widen, and it was at its height in the 1996 election. Finally, the gender gap emerged because of the changing politics of men, not women. Men have become increasingly Republican while the partisanship of women has remained relatively stable since the 1960s (Kaufman and Petrocik 1999; Norrander 1999, 2008; Carroll 2006; Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008).

A possible demand-side argument is that Republican voters are biased against women. Elder (2008) demonstrates that regional party shifts have contributed to the partisan gap in Congress, though it is less clear whether gender biases are to blame. While Democratic women who run for Congress do fare better than Republican women, this has typically been attributed to the fact that GOP women run in tougher races (Cooperman and Oppenheimer 2001; Evans 2005; Palmer and Simon 2008).³ Indeed, similarly situated Republican women win as often as Democratic women and Republican men (Darcy et al. 1994; Sanbonmatsu 2006), and Dolan (2004) finds that party and incumbency, not candidate gender, are the best predictors of vote choice. Still, experimental data suggest that GOP voters are less supportive of women (King and Matland 2003), and perceived bias may deter Republican women from running. The evidence for this is slim, however, as the numbers of Republican and Democratic women who ran for Congress in 2010 were nearly equal. Most of the GOP women were very conservative challengers who did not win their primaries, but such widespread defeat is not clear indication of gender bias as only 13 of the 113 challengers had past state legislative experience (CAWP 2012). The surge in Republican women in 2010 does imply, though, that pure pipeline theories cannot fully explain the emergence of women candidates, as the number of GOP women in state legislatures has decreased over time (Palmer and Simon 2008). Moreover, this shows that the Republican Party does not repel all women, but rather that the women who do run for office are very ideologically conservative (Schreiber 2012, 2014). One thing these patterns certainly highlight is the need for candidate ideology to be incorporated into gender and politics research.

³ See Sanbonmatsu (2002) and Stambough and O'Regan (2007) for similar findings at the state legislative and gubernatorial levels, respectively.

Party Politics, Gender Issues, and Gendered Institutions

Another consideration is how the positions of the two major parties have incorporated gender issues into their political ideologies and party platforms. The conventional wisdom is probably that the parties have polarized on gender and family issues, with both occupying opposing positions on the issue of women's rights (Freeman 1987; Wolbrecht 2000). The Democratic Party has aligned with feminist groups and the Republican Party with anti-feminist groups (Freeman 1987, 1989). These alliances have fluctuated over the past several decades, however, and for most of the twentieth century, the Republican Party was viewed as more progressive on women's rights. The Republicans championed the Equal Rights Amendment and were originally more supportive of the role of women in politics than the Democrats (Freeman 1999; Costain 1992). Some of the earliest research on the representation of women in state legislatures found that the number of women was lower in states where the Democratic Party dominated (Diamond 1977; Rule 1981). In a 1971 newsletter to fellow Republican Party leaders, then-Senator and chair of the Republican National Committee Bob Dole described the party's position on gender issues (Ford Congressional Papers 1972):

The Republican Party has traditionally been the leader on behalf of women's rights; in 1968 Republicans became the first major party to endorse an equal pay for equal work platform plank; in 1916 Republicans were the first to favor women's suffrage; in 1940 the National Convention came out in favor of a Constitutional Amendment providing equal rights for men and women; and in 1971 ours was the first party to endorse officially the Equal Rights Amendment before the Congress.

The letter was an appeal for "fairer representation" for women at the 1972 Republican Party convention. In a subsequent newsletter sent by RNC co-chairs Anne Armstrong and Tom Evans, Dole was quoted as urging "every state [delegation to] come as near as possible to a 50-50 split between men and women," also noting in parentheses, "after all, women do 90% of the

work; they should get 50% of the delegates” (Ford Congressional Papers 1972). RNC co-chair Anne Armstrong gave the keynote address at the 1972 party convention, possibly to symbolize the party’s support for women’s issues.

Similar changes were unfolding on the Democratic side, though Democratic reforms had more force than the recommendations and appeals on the Republican side (Freeman 1987). The Democratic Commission on Delegate Selection and Party Reform, also known as the McGovern-Fraser Commission, mandated the “reasonable representation” of women as delegates to the 1972 national party convention (Flammang 1997). The reforms were successful; nearly forty percent of the delegates at the 1972 Democratic convention were women, up from thirteen percent at the 1968 delegation (Freeman 1987; Wolbrecht 2000). While the Republicans did not pass formal sex-based affirmative action measures, the party nevertheless issued a report encouraging states to send balanced delegations to its national convention, perhaps to simulate recent reforms made on the Democratic side (Freeman 1987). And these efforts seemed to work: women comprised thirty percent of the 1972 Republican delegation, almost twice the proportion at the previous convention (Beck and Sorouf 1992; see Schnall 2005 for an overview).

The feminist movement put women’s issues on the legislative agenda, and the rising prominence of interest groups such as the National Organization of Women (NOW) gave women more electoral clout. The parties converged on women’s issues in the early 1970s, as illustrated by the politics around the 1972 national party conventions. In Congress, there was bipartisan support for gender issues, and policymakers passed a record number of women’s rights bills during that time (Costain 1992; Freeman 1999; Sanbonmatsu 2004). The 1973-74 legislative session was particularly successful, when Congress passed the largest number of laws relating to women’s rights (Costain 1992). Most of this legislation received support from Democrats and

Republicans alike, and party was not a strong predictor of support for women's rights policies in Congress (Wolbrecht 2000; see Sanbonmatsu 2004 for a review).

After this brief bipartisan period, the party platforms began to diverge in the late 1970s, with the Democratic Party aligning with feminist groups and the Republican Party with anti-feminist groups (Freeman 1987; Wolbrecht 2000). As the influence of the Christian Right grew, the Republican Party began to shift toward a more conservative position on women's rights. The mobilization of social conservatives against the ERA made the party's support of the amendment more controversial (Sanbonmatsu 2004), and moderate women in the Republican Party were losing ground to antifeminist women like Phyllis Schlafly (Freeman 1987). By 1980, and for the first time in forty years, the Republican platform did not endorse the ERA. The platform did not explicitly oppose the amendment, but it did criticize the Carter administration for pressuring states to ratify it (Layman 2001).

Scholarly accounts differ as to why this polarization between the parties on gender issues occurred. Freeman (1986, 1987) suggests that the cultures of the two parties are distinct. The Democratic Party is pluralistic, with multiple groups making demands on party leaders. For Democrats, representation means the inclusion of a wide array of interests and viewpoints. The Republican Party, in contrast, has a unitary structure, and diversity of opinions within the party is frowned upon. Group characteristics are ignored unless the party is trying to appeal to group interests in the electorate (Freeman 1986, 1987). Wolbrecht (2000) provides a different explanation for why the parties divided on gender issues. She argues that the emergence of the feminist and antifeminist movements framed women's issues in terms of liberation versus tradition. These debates over gender, morality, and the family mapped closely onto the left-right political spectrum. The agenda adopted by the feminist movement fit well with the Democratic

Party, which was increasingly becoming the party that advocated for civil rights (see Carmines and Stimson 1989). The emerging alignment of social conservatives with the Republican Party provided a space for antifeminists in the party (Wolbrecht 2000).

The second perspective on how the parties have responded to gender issues departs from the above accounts. Sanbonmatsu's (2004) findings question the extent to which the parties have polarized on women's issues. While the parties have staked out distinct and polarized positions on abortion and the ERA, she argues that these party divides are not evident on a range of other issues concerning gender equality, such as the role of women in politics and sex discrimination. The Democrats and the Republicans have instead sought out the center: "to be 'for' both the goal of gender equality and the traditional family" (Sanbonmatsu 2004, 182). Moreover, party leaders have attempted to moderate what differences there are between the parties on gender in the hopes of appealing to certain groups of voters. The gender gap in voting behavior prevents the parties from aligning too closely with either a liberal or conservative position on gender roles. The Democratic Party has at times attempted to win back male voters by distancing itself from feminist organizations; the Republican Party has often tried to attract women voters by embracing more liberal positions on the role of women. In sum, there may be less of a partisan coloring to gender equality debates than is suggested by previous research.

A crucial point here is that the Republican and Democratic parties have adopted similar positions on the role of women in politics (Sanbonmatsu 2004). This finding is also supported by evidence that both parties actively recruit female congressional candidates (Burrell 1994). Perhaps equally important is the fact that the parties' positions on the role of women in politics has not changed since the late 1980s, although the partisan gap in Congress has increased steadily during this time. Freeman (1987) even suggests that Republicans are more supportive of

women within the party (see also Kanthak and Krause 2010), and Cooperman and Oppenheimer (2001) also note that women have made greater inroads in the Republican leadership than in the Democratic leadership. In short, while the conventional wisdom might imply that the Republican Party is the “sexist” party, there is little scholarly consensus on which party is better at promoting women in political office.

A somewhat different issue is how the parties as institutions are gendered and how the ideologies of the two parties are gendered. There is a growing body of research that explores the gendering of political and non-political institutions (Chappell 2006; Duerst-Lahti 2002; Enloe 2013; Hawkesworth 2003; Katzenstein 1999). For instance, Katzenstein’s (1999, 176) analysis of the church and military shows that the meaning of gender “unfolds within institutional locations,” and the institution itself shapes the preferences of and political strategies used by those within the institution. In the case of Congress, the ideologies of the parties certainly have implications for the rhetoric that candidates employ and the strategies that members use. In the 2012 elections, for example, there were a handful of prominent Republican candidates who made comments that were widely perceived as offensive toward women, particularly the remarks on “legitimate rape” from Senate candidates Todd Akin and Richard Mourdock. The gendering of Republican conservatism and the gendering of the Republican Party in Congress may be part and parcel of its rightward partisan shift.

The main issue here, however, is not whether institutions and ideologies are gendered, but rather how these partisan shifts are more or less attractive to different types of men and women. Indeed, some women likely prefer the present conservatism of the Republican Party (Schreiber 2012, 2014). Women such as Michele Bachmann (R-MN) and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) have been leading voices for conservative principles, and female members in the House now

adopt the same narratives as their male counterparts. As Katzenstein's (1999) findings illustrate, it is possible that the political preferences of female MCs evolve within the institution over time, but this is probably less likely to occur within institutions like political parties and even less so at the congressional level.⁴ Indeed, Poole and Rosenthal (2007, 28) claim that members "enter a house of Congress and stay put until they die with their ideological boots on." The question is whether the current brand of Republican conservatism has turned women off to the party. The fact that female voters have remained relatively stable in their partisanship over the last few decades suggests that any "anti-woman" stances taken by the GOP have had minimal long-term electoral consequences, at least with respect to women abandoning the Republicans and running to the Democrats.

Why So Few (Republican) Women?

As noted at the outset, one puzzle of this dissertation is why the number of Democratic women in Congress has increased steadily since the 1980s while the number of Republican women has instead plateaued. This growing partisan disparity has occurred against a political backdrop of increasing levels of partisan polarization and heightened partisan rancor. Over the past thirty years, the two parties have become more homogeneous internally and more ideologically distinct from each other, giving rise to a policymaking process that is almost completely structured along partisan lines. While leading theoretical explanations for women's underrepresentation are largely party-blind or party-neutral, my dissertation brings together the partisan polarization and gender and politics literatures and examines the myriad ways in which ideological shifts in Congress matter for contemporary patterns of women's representation. In

⁴ However, Katzenstein's (1999) general point that gender and institutions are inextricably linked and that institutions shape the strategies used by its members is very much in line with the argument here.

doing so, it makes several contributions to the gender and politics subfield, and it enhances our understanding of why Republican women remain dramatically underrepresented in office.

First, my dissertation develops a party fit explanation for the growing partisan disparity among women in Congress. Of critical importance is the notion that changes in partisan institutions and political contexts matter for patterns of women's representation. The central claim is that candidate ideology—and her ideological fit with the party delegation—influences the decision to seek elective office. The main hypothesis is that, in the current political context, ideological moderates are less likely to run for and remain in Congress than those at the poles. The argument is not gender specific, but it has implications for the growing partisan gap among female MCs. First, Republican women in the congressional pipeline and Republican women in Congress have historically been to the left of their male co-partisans. Second, there is a dearth of conservative women in the pipeline and in congressional office. In other words, the Republican Party disproportionately elects men because ideological moderates, and thus many Republican women, do not “fit” in the contemporary Republican Party.

The party fit argument bears similarities to the claims in Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013). They examine the growing partisan gap among female state legislators (see also Elder 2012), and they, too, attribute this disparity to the rightward shift in the Republican Party and its disproportionate effect on Republican women due to their moderate ideological leanings.⁵ However, there are key theoretical and empirical differences between party fit and the Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) argument. First, party fit is about the ideological conformity between the candidate and the party to which she would belong upon election (see also Thomsen 2011, 2012). In an analysis of state legislators, what would be relevant for party fit is the ideology of

⁵ The authors do not specify exactly what they mean by “Republican Party,” but it is presumably the national Republican Party and the national Republican Party's ideology and image.

the state legislative party, rather than the national party's image. A related point is that the ideologies of the two parties vary across state legislatures (Shor and McCarty 2011), just as the number and proportion of Republican and Democratic women in state legislative office varies across states. Party fit would use this variation to test whether state legislatures with more conservative Republican parties have lower levels of Republican women in office and whether state legislatures with more liberal Democratic parties have higher levels of Democratic women in office.⁶ Lastly, party fit is also concerned with those who are a good fit for their party, and the dearth of conservative women in the pipeline is equally important for why there are so few Republican women in Congress. If Republican women are on average to the left of GOP men, but there is nevertheless a large pool of conservative women, this would bode well for the representation of Republican women according to party fit.

Second, the party fit framework offers an additional explanation for why Republican male and female members of Congress have become more ideologically similar over time (Frederick 2009; see also Osborn 2012). This is exactly what we would expect if moderate Republican women have increasingly opted out of congressional politics. Swers (2002) found that Republican women were still more likely to support women's issues in the 104th Congress, but there were only a few conservative women in her sample at that point. In later work, Swers and Larson (2005) identify different Republican women "archetypes." The party fit framework suggests why one of these archetypes—the conservative Republican woman—can succeed in the contemporary Republican Party (see Evans 2005; Frederick 2009). If the party fit argument is right, there is reason to be hopeful about the congressional representation of Republican women

⁶ In a cross-sectional analysis of the partisan gap among female state legislators, Elder (2012) tests the relationship between the ideology of state elected officials and the percentage of Republican or Democratic women in state legislatures, but this is neither theoretically nor empirically the same as the ideology of the state legislative party. I discuss the differences between Elder's (2012) argument and party fit in greater detail in the next chapter.

given the growing number of conservative women state legislators and the recent election of conservative women to Congress. As Republican women become a better fit for the party delegation, the partisan imbalance should diminish and patterns of women's representation in both parties should follow similar trajectories.

Third, the empirical analyses in my dissertation shed light on the specific mechanisms that are driving the partisan disparity in women's representation. Scholars have recently drawn attention to aggregate differences in the percentages of Republican and Democratic women in state legislative office (Elder 2012; Sanbonmatsu and Carroll 2013), but it is crucial that we understand the processes that underlie this gap. As such, the empirical chapters of my dissertation examine the emergence of new political candidates as well as the replacement of existing officeholders.⁷ I analyze the decision to run for office among potential candidates in the congressional pipeline and the decision to seek re-election among members of Congress. While existing studies of women's representation tend to focus either on legislative institutions or the pool of eligible candidates, I look at both Congress as an institution and the pathways to congressional office to offer a more complete picture of why the partisan gap has continued to widen over the past thirty years.

Fourth, the research design of my dissertation is particularly novel. Previous studies on the dearth of women in office have analyzed variation in political ambition between female and male potential candidates (Lawless and Fox 2005, 2010; Shames 2013), variation in resources such as money and votes between female and male candidates (Burrell 1994; Crespín and Deitz 2010; Darcy et al. 1994), variation in the percentage of women in office across state legislatures

⁷ I do not examine an additional mechanism—patterns of voter support—that might also have implications for the growing partisan disparity. This decision is a reflection of the prevailing notion that “when women run, women win.” I plan to explore patterns of voter support in future research, but the empirical analyses of my dissertation nevertheless shed light on two different mechanisms: the decision to run for and the decision to remain in congressional office.

(Arceneaux 2001; Sanbonmatsu 2006), and variation in the percentage of Democratic and Republican women in state legislative and congressional office (Sanbonmatsu 2002; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013; Elder 2008, 2012; Palmer and Simon 2008). My dissertation, by contrast, offers the first empirical analysis of the decision to run for Congress among those in the congressional pipeline, and it is the first empirical analysis of how candidate ideology influences the emergence of female candidates and the retention of female incumbents. This is surprising given the overwhelming emphasis in the literature on candidate emergence. Yet, ambition may or may not translate into actual candidacies, and indeed, most individuals with even the highest levels of political ambition will never run for elective office. Moreover, existing studies of candidates or legislatures consist of individuals who have either already decided to run or were elected to office, and therefore limit our ability to gain leverage on those who could have run but did not. Importantly, the research design here allows me to uncover within-party variation across women and discuss, for example, why some women run for office and others do not.

Why So Few Moderates in Congress?

The argument also has implications that extend beyond the realm of gender and politics. The party fit framework is, in the most general sense, a theory of candidate emergence. Scholars of political ambition have long emphasized a host of factors that influence the decision to run for office, such as the probability of winning, the benefits of the office, and the cost of running (Schlesinger 1966; Black 1972; Rohde 1979; Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Maestas et al. 2006). My dissertation introduces a new variable into what Rohde (1979) and Aldrich (1980) call the “calculus of candidacy.” I suggest that the ideological congruence between a potential candidate and the party delegation matters for the decision to seek elective office. In other words, political

ambition and candidate emergence is influenced in part by the ideological makeup of the party delegation, and more specifically, by the individual's ability to succeed within and benefit from partisan institutions.

The empirical chapters apply the party fit framework to the contemporary political context. The findings provide an additional explanation for the persistence of polarization in Congress. There has been a recent surge in scholarly and popular attention to the subject of partisan polarization. Pundits, journalists, academics, and citizens alike are concerned about heightened levels of what Theriault (2013) calls "partisan warfare" in Congress. Indeed, these sharp partisan divisions have extensive and far-reaching implications for the substance of policy outcomes, the nature of political debate, and the design and implementation of public policies. Mettler (2011) notes that submerged policies, or those that disguise or subvert the government's role, have proven easier to enact in the current congressional environment because they face fewer institutional hurdles. This mode of policy delivery has important effects on perceptions of government, levels of political engagement, and the promotion of democratic citizenship (Campbell 2002; Mettler 1998, 2005, 2011; Mettler and Soss 2004; Soss 1999). Policies like student loans and tax breaks, for example, are hidden from the public's view and leave citizens oblivious to the significant role that government plays in their lives (Mettler 2011). In short, the combative style of policymaking that now pervades Congress holds enormous consequences for the quality of legislative representation in America, and the features of contemporary public policies only exacerbate the current gulf between the government and the citizenry.

It is therefore crucial that we understand why, specifically, partisan polarization has continued to increase at such an alarming rate. The conventional wisdom is that gerrymandering and party primaries are the leading culprits for this trend, but the direct evidence to support this

claim has been lacking. This “how” of polarization is especially important given that different types of solutions are being proposed and enacted in an attempt to counteract polarization. For example, initiatives aimed at hiring third parties to draw congressional districts and those seeking to change the type of primary system might not be a cure all, or even a partial solution, for achieving this end. While candidate emergence has gone largely unexplored in the academic literature as well as popular debates, my dissertation highlights the role of candidate self-selection as a reinforcing mechanism for polarization. I shift the focus to the types of candidates who run for Congress, or put differently, the choices that voters are given when they go to the polls. Indeed, if the only candidates who are willing to run for office emerge from the ideological extremes, it seems unlikely that polarization in Congress will fade anytime soon.

Outline of Dissertation

My dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 develops the concept of party fit, and I explain why ideological conformity with the party delegation matters for candidate emergence and member retirement. In this chapter I also discuss why party fit has a disproportionate impact on Republican women. Chapter 3 explores the candidate emergence stage among likely congressional candidates, and I analyze the decision to run for Congress among state legislators in the congressional pipeline. I draw on two different datasets to illustrate how party fit matters for the decision to seek higher office. I use data from the Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006) to examine state legislators’ perceptions of running for Congress, namely their perceived ability to win the primary and their reported value of a seat in the U.S. House. I then utilize Bonica’s (2013b) ideological estimates of state legislators to analyze ideological variation in the state legislators who did and did not run for Congress from 2000 to 2010. I find that

ideological moderates in the pipeline—liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state legislators—are less likely to run for Congress than those at the poles, and that this disparity is especially pronounced among Republicans.

Chapter 4 describes why this ideological disparity in the decision to run for Congress contributes to the growing partisan gap among women in Congress. Specifically, I discuss how the findings in the previous chapter have implications for the representation of Republican women. I show that ideology matters in similar ways for male and female state legislators, and in fact, ideology outweighs gender as a predictor of political ambition and the decision to run for congressional office. The gender and politics literature has focused overwhelmingly on women as a single category, but the results here instead highlight variation across women and allow us to consider why some women run for office and others do not.

Chapter 5 explores how patterns of member retention matter for the representation of women in Congress. I use quantitative data on member retirement and length of congressional service to examine differences in legislator retention between Republican and Democratic women. I show that liberal Republican and conservative Democratic members of Congress are more likely to retire from the U.S. House than ideological conformists. This chapter suggests that the widespread replacement of moderates offers an additional explanation for the partisan disparity of women in Congress and the recent ideological shifts among female Republican MCs. Chapter 6 relies on qualitative data collected from interviews with more than twenty former members of Congress, members of their staff, and party elites.⁸ The qualitative data enhance our understanding of the kinds of experiences that ideological moderates had during their tenure in office, and the interviews shed light on the various factors that shaped the decision to retire. In

⁸ The names of the individual members will remain anonymous. Throughout the dissertation, I noted the specific date of the interviews, and in most cases, I provided a general description of the member's ideology and level of seniority.

the concluding chapter, I discuss the broader implications of the findings for the partisan disparity in women's representation and the persistence of partisan polarization in Congress.

Chapter 2: Introducing the Concept of Party Fit

In October 2013, veteran Republican representative C. W. Bill Young announced he would not seek re-election in Florida's 13th congressional district. National Republican leaders immediately began their candidate quest. They reached out to Jack Latvala, a longtime state senator who represents more than two-thirds of the U.S. House district. Latvala had no interest in running for Congress, and in fact, he did not even return their call (Huey-Burns and Conroy 2013). Bill Cole, a rising state senator from West Virginia, recently received an in-person visit from members of National Republican Campaign Committee. They tried to persuade him to run for the congressional seat in the state's 3rd district, and they ensured him that the seat would be the "Republicans' top target in the entire country" (Huey-Burns and Conroy 2013). The cajoling failed to work; like Latvala, Cole had no desire to run for Congress.

Nearly fifty ago Schlesinger (1966, 1) claimed, "Ambition lies at the heart of politics." Representative government relies upon a supply of individuals who wish to hold elective office. The election of candidates instills the democratic process with legitimacy, and it gives those who were elected the authority to rule. Elections are also the principal mechanism that voters use to hold political leaders accountable and to evaluate government performance. It therefore behooves political scientists to examine why some individuals run for office and others do not. The democratic ideal deeply depends on, and indeed takes for granted, the existence of a vibrant and healthy pool of candidates from which voters can choose. If promising individuals such as Jack Latvala and Bill Cole overwhelmingly opt to forego a congressional bid, this has enormous implications for the quality of representative democracy.

Existing Literature on Political Parties and Candidate Emergence

Political parties were never intended to figure prominently into American politics. The Constitution made no mention of parties, and the Framers sought to prevent any single official or group from having undue influence and power. This institutional framework laid the foundation for candidate-centered campaigns and elections, though the relative strength of political parties has waxed and waned over time. The “golden age” of political parties in America was during the years immediately before and after the end of the twentieth century (Sorauf 1980). Parties controlled nominations, organized and mobilized voters, raised money, and transmitted campaign rhetoric. As Sorauf (1980, 447) writes, “The parties were, in short, the medium through which the campaign was waged.”

The glory days of political parties would not last, and the party organizations experienced a gradual decline between the early 1900s and the mid-twentieth century. By the 1960s, popular attention had all but shifted to the growing importance of interest groups, political consultants, and political action committees (Sorouf 1980). Political scientists dismissed the role of the national party in elections (e.g., Mayhew 1974), and parties were viewed as inconsequential, having only a “feeble” influence on congressional nominations (Jacobson 2004, 16). The literature was absorbed with the candidate-centered nature of American politics and devoted most of its attention to the rise of the incumbency advantage, which left little room for parties to shape campaigns and elections (Erikson 1971; Jacobson 2004). In the candidate-centered era, primary voters, rather than party bosses, determined who would receive the party nomination. In other words, perceptions of the role of party-in-elections mirrored those of the role of party-in-government. Just as committees were the locus of power in Congress, so too were the candidates

themselves the movers and shakers in the electoral sphere. In both of these realms, the party was deemed a remnant of the past.

In the contemporary context, the major focus of congressional campaigns is on candidates, not parties (Herrnson 2004). Unlike most democracies, where parties are the main contenders in elections, in the U.S., candidates are responsible for organizing and running their campaigns. Parties provide financial support and organizational resources to political candidates but this happens typically after they have won their party's nomination. Candidates file their own paperwork to declare their candidacies, raise their own money, formulate their particular campaign strategy, and direct their day-to-day campaign operations. Party leaders do play a role in encouraging and discouraging individuals to run for office and alleviating concerns that prospective candidates have. As a recruiter for one of the national parties explained, "We had to talk to them about how wonderful of a job this was and how much they would like it" (3/1/2013). Leaders also attempt to dissuade others from running for Congress: "We tried to clear the field. We told local community leaders not to run anybody against our guy" (3/1/2013).

But as Herrnson (2004, 35) notes, "[Parties] serve more as vehicles that self-recruited candidates use to advance their careers than as organizations that can make or break those careers. Party recruitment has been largely replaced by a process referred to as candidate emergence." The same recruiter from above said, "It is a major decision to run for Congress... People have got to be willing to take a chance, to go out and raise the money, and devote a year of their life to running" (3/1/2013). A different national party recruiter echoed this point: "The truth is, most recruiting for Congress is self-recruiting. You are interested in politics, you are engaged with your party, and you decide to run. It's not because somebody told you about it; it's a motivation you have" (3/22/2013). Moreover, because most potential congressional candidates

have reached some degree of success in their private lives, there are significant personal and professional costs involved in running for Congress. As one former member of Congress said in an interview: “People forget that you pay a big price to run for Congress. It’s nice to say, ‘You make \$170,000 and blah, blah, blah.’ But the opportunity costs are huge. It’s not just financial. It’s a big personal cost, not only to your family but to your person, your reputation” (2/28/2013). In short, it is the individual herself who must decide whether or not to throw her hat in the ring; it is the candidate who bears the personal and professional costs for making that decision; and it is the candidate who is responsible for the outcome of the election (Herrnson 2004).

The Resurgence of Parties in American Politics

In light of party resurgence at the elite level, the literature on American parties has seen a reversal of fortune in recent years. Bartels (2000, 35) posed one of the initial challenges to the “exaggerated and outdated” decline-of-parties thesis, documenting an increasing impact of partisanship on voting behavior since the mid-1970s. Hetherington (2001) found that partisan polarization in Congress has clarified the ideological positions of the two parties for ordinary Americans, which has further increased the salience of parties to voters. And while the question of mass polarization has been heatedly disputed (e.g., Fiorina et al. 2006; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008), scholars agree that voters are better sorted along party lines and increasingly likely to match their partisanship with their ideological preferences (Levendusky 2009). These accounts of the renewal of mass partisanship, while revisionist just ten years ago, have now become widely accepted in the literature (see Hetherington 2009).

The argument that parties are increasingly relevant in American politics has expanded well beyond the realm of voting behavior. In fact, the resurgence-of-parties thesis emerged long

after others had first highlighted the strengthening of the party-as-organization (e.g., Herrnson 1986). The national party committees were created in the mid-19th century, but they were weak during most of their existence as power was instead concentrated in political machines at the local and county level. Due to various political and social reforms, the rule of party bosses gradually came to an end. These changes would later open the door for the emergence of a strong national party, but electoral incentives were the most powerful catalyst in this transition. In response to significant Democratic gains in the 1974 and 1976 elections, the Republicans initiated a series of programs to strengthen the party organizationally and enable the party to provide money and services to campaigns (Bibby 1979). The Democratic Party followed suit after being trounced in the 1980 elections, and there was widespread agreement within the party to imitate the Republicans' party-building strategy (Herrnson 2010).

The parties' congressional campaign committees have now developed into huge bases of support for House and Senate candidates. National party organizations occupy a prominent role in elections by contributing funds to candidates, providing campaign resources and services, and channeling campaign support from other candidates, PACs, and interest groups. But again, the role of the national party in candidate emergence is limited at best, and the candidate-centered nature of congressional elections has remained intact (Herrnson 2004). As a result, models in political science overwhelmingly focus on the ambitious office-seeker, the so-called "self-starter." The ideas originally set forth as ambition theory (Schlesinger 1966) would later be developed into strategic-actor theory (Jacobson and Kernell 1983). In this view, the candidate calculates the utility of seeking office by evaluating the benefits of the office, the probability of winning, and the cost of running (e.g., Schlesinger 1966; Black 1972; Rohde 1979; Aldrich 1980; Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Brace 1984; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1987; Maestas et

al. 2006). For example, potential candidates assess the local and national climate, previous electoral margins, district partisanship, favorability of economic conditions, and whether or not an incumbent is running (Rohde 1979; Bond, Covington, and Fleisher 1985; Jacobson 1989). The length of the term and greater career prospects shape the benefits associated with the office (Rohde 1979). The individual's willingness to take risks (Rohde 1979) and the perceived campaign and family costs associated with a candidacy (Maestas et al. 2006) affect the decision to run for office. Scholars have also explored the sociological roots of political ambition (e.g., Lawless and Fox 2010), but the literature as a whole is structured around strategic-actor models (see La Raja 2010).

Recently, however, a small group of scholars have claimed that national parties do play a role in recruiting and nominating candidates, albeit often an informal one and primarily in competitive and targeted races. Dominguez (2005) argues that key party actors organize well in advance of primaries to select or recruit candidates to receive the party's nomination for a variety of offices. Party leaders ensure that their preferred candidates are provided with the requisite resources to win the primary and that their undesired candidates do not receive such assistance (Dominguez 2005). Others have demonstrated that the party plays a role in presidential nominations, which have typically been viewed as beyond the realm of party control. For example, Cohen et al. (2008) find that party elites winnow the field of presidential candidates and build coalitions around a single candidate. To be sure, the idea that national parties are involved in recruitment processes has been around for some time now (e.g., Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Fleisher and Bond 2004), but scholars have just begun to test this hypothesis empirically.

The theoretical framework I develop in this chapter considers both the candidate-centered nature of campaigns as well as the resurgence of parties in recent years. I retain the strategic

actor structure but I leave open the possibility that candidate emergence is also influenced by party leaders and party elites. The rise of the national parties makes them difficult to ignore, but the decision to run for office is, in the American context, a choice that is ultimately made by the candidate herself. The framework is thus similar to traditional models of political ambition, but in light of the nationalization of congressional elections and the increased importance of political parties, I seek to introduce an additional variable—what I call party fit—into theories of candidate emergence. It should be emphasized that the theoretical argument is explicitly non-gendered, meaning that the hypotheses work in similar ways for men and women. However, the implications of the theory are gendered, with women affected by recent partisan trends in different ways than their male counterparts. I lay out the general theoretical framework below, and I discuss the implications for women’s representation at the end of the chapter.

A Party Fit Explanation for Candidate Emergence

Party fit is defined as the congruence between a candidate’s ideology and the ideological reputation of her party. The party’s ideological reputation is about “what the party stands for—and acts on—in terms of policy” (Aldrich and Freeze 2011, 186), and it gives meaning to its label and distinguishes the party from its opponent (Grynaviski 2010; Snyder and Ting 2002; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). While a party’s ideological reputation matters in clear ways for the kinds of policies it pursues, scholars have paid less attention to how this reputation matters for the inclusion and exclusion of candidates in the electoral process. In this way, the party fit framework draws on insights from the theory of conditional party government (“CPG”; Aldrich 1995, 2011; Rohde 1991; Aldrich and Rohde 2001). CPG emphasizes two key features of partisan institutions to explain their strength or weakness: the relative degree of internal party

homogeneity and inter-partisan polarization. The main idea is that when levels of intra-party homogeneity and inter-party heterogeneity are high, members have stronger incentives to act collectively. The structure of preferences influences members' willingness to grant power to party leaders, and members will invest more power in the party leadership when these two "conditions" are satisfied. My dissertation extends the principles of CPG and suggests that the ideological makeup of the party delegation has implications for patterns of candidate entry as well as candidate exit.

The central claim here is that party fit influences the decision to run for and remain in elective office. Prospective candidates, male and female alike, self-select into electoral contests if they believe they are a good ideological fit for the party, and those who do not are more likely to abstain. The theoretical expectations apply to both incumbent members of Congress (MCs) and non-incumbent potential candidates who are well situated to run for Congress, namely those holding state legislative office. The political situations of incumbents and non-incumbents differ markedly, and the probability that an incumbent MC seeks re-election is much higher than the probability that a state legislator runs for Congress. Yet despite this disparity, both comprise the pool of the prospective congressional candidates for the next election cycle.

There are two mechanisms by which party fit affects the types of candidates who seek elective office: self-selection and party recruitment (Aldrich 2011). Candidates will select into electoral contests if they believe they are a good fit for the party, and those who do not will instead abstain. Similarly, party leaders will recruit candidates who conform to the party's reputation and gate-keep those who do not. It is difficult to distinguish between these two mechanisms, and indeed, they are almost certainly mutually reinforcing. Party recruitment and gate-keeping efforts likely shape perceptions of party fit, and vice versa. In this way, the party

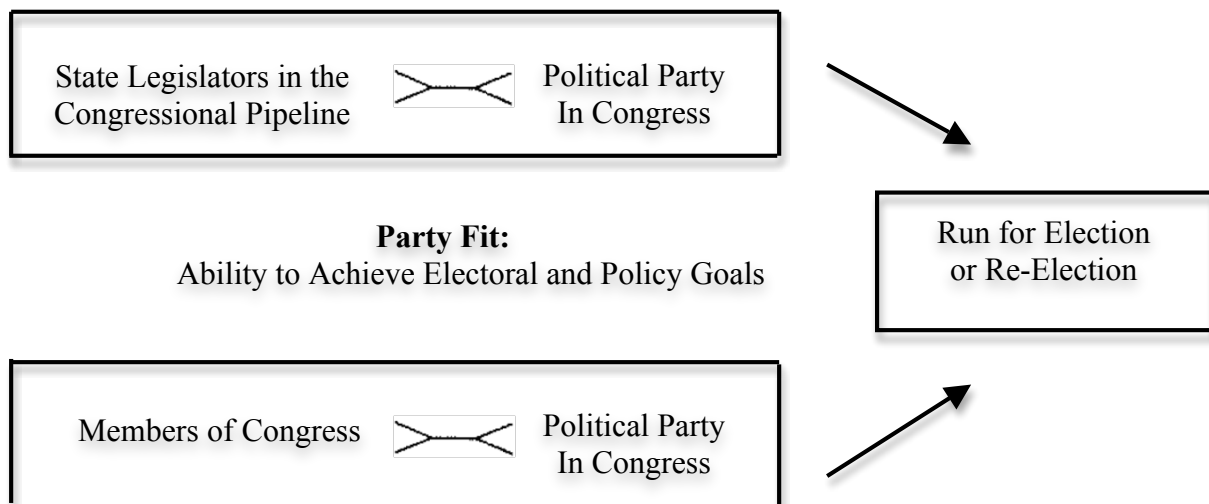
fit framework is a synthesis of both self-selection and party recruitment. Due to the continued prominence of the strategic actor framework in the candidate emergence literature as well as the candidate-centered nature of American elections (Jacobson 2004; Herrnson 2004; McGhee and Pearson 2011), I emphasize self-selection here.

There are many reasons to expect that, regardless of gender, prospective candidates rely on the party's reputation to determine if they can achieve their electoral and policy goals (Fenno 1973; Mayhew 1974).⁹ First, candidates draw on this reputation to estimate their likelihood of winning. Sniderman and Stiglitz (2012) show that candidates receive a "reputational premium" if they take a position that is consistent with the policy outlook of their party, and those who are positioned to run for office use the party's reputation to evaluate their own chance of winning. Second, prospective candidates rely on the party's reputation to assess their future policy impact and their influence in the legislative chamber (Fenno 1973). In a personal interview, a congressional recruiter for one of the national parties spoke to me at length about the non-electoral goals of candidates: "The ability to get something done is always a question for people that want to serve in public office. Can they be effective? Can they make a difference?" (3/22/2013). Members of Congress now experience intense pressure to support the party's legislative agenda, and those who defect can expect to be punished for their actions and denied party rewards (Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008). The party fit hypothesis suggests that ideological conformity with the party influences prospective candidates' ability to achieve their electoral and policy goals. Those with preferences that conform to the party's reputation are more likely to

⁹ Prospective candidates can learn about the party's reputation in various ways, such as polls, the media, and past candidates, but the ideological makeup of the congressional party is the best measure of party reputation. What is important is that this reputation provides different information than just knowing the ideology of the district.

run for and remain in political office than those with preferences that differ from the party's reputation.¹⁰ A graphic illustration of the model is provided in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: A Snapshot View of How Party Fit Affects Candidate Emergence



The key point is that the makeup of the party delegation affects the decision to run for office. The value of the office varies across individuals depending on how well they conform to the party's ideological reputation, and this variation across individuals matters for the decision for run for election or re-election. Like traditional strategic actor theories, this is a snapshot view of candidate emergence given a particular configuration of incentives. The introduction of the

¹⁰ Snyder and Ting (2002) show formally that joining a party is less appealing to politicians whose preferences are distant from the party platform and more appealing to those with preferences that are similar to the platform. Like them, I also assume that these preferences are exogenous. As noted above, while Katzenstein's (1999) study of feminists in the church and the military suggests that their political ideas were not fully formed prior to joining these organizations, it is fairly safe to assume that the political preferences of candidates are formed prior to running for Congress (Poole and Rosenthal 2007).

concept of party fit, even within this snapshot view, extends our understanding of political ambition and the decision to run for office, as it encourages us to think about how the “calculus of candidacy” is influenced by party institutions, and more specifically, by an individual’s ability to succeed within and benefit from those institutions.

How the Historical and Political Context Affects Candidate Emergence

We can also move beyond this snapshot view and consider how party configurations and the ability to achieve these goals changes over time as well. Research on candidate emergence has explored how the electoral environment matters for the probability of winning, but little attention has been given to how the political environment matters for the costs and benefits associated with holding elective office. Yet the decision to run for office does not occur in a political vacuum. It is important to ask how the incentives to run change over time, and specifically in this case how these incentives change for individuals of various ideological stripes. Indeed, whether candidates are not only more or less likely to win but also whether they are able to influence policy and obtain an influential position in the chamber is embedded within a particular historical and political context.

In the mid-20th century, for example, conservative Southern Democrats in Congress were electorally safe, they held powerful committee chairmanships, and they successfully thwarted liberal legislation (Polsby 2004). Progressive and even liberal Republicans comprised an influential wing of the GOP establishment during this time and served as a prominent model of what it meant to be a Republican (Kabaservice 2012). One of the older moderate Republicans that I interviewed echoed this point. He said, “I’m not a conservative; don’t call me a conservative. I’m a Republican. The conservatives have taken over my party. My heroes were

Dewey, Eisenhower, Rockefeller, people like that. They represented the party” (3/14/2013).

During the 1950s and 1960s, when the parties hewed closer to the center, ideological moderates in both parties were able to achieve their electoral and policy goals.

Historical institutionalist scholars have long advocated for increased attention to the role of time in politics (i.e., Orren and Skowronek 2004; Pierson 2004). And this need not run counter to rational choice principles or strategic actor frameworks. As Pierson (2004) notes, rational choice analysis “offers essential analytical tools for investigating temporal processes.” With respect to candidate emergence, the timing and sequencing of changes in the political environment has consequences for the opportunities that are available to potential candidates. Candidates and elected officials decide whether or not to run for office depending on the incentive structure that is in place when they are considering an electoral bid. What is crucial is that the costs and benefits that influence the value of the office evolve over time.

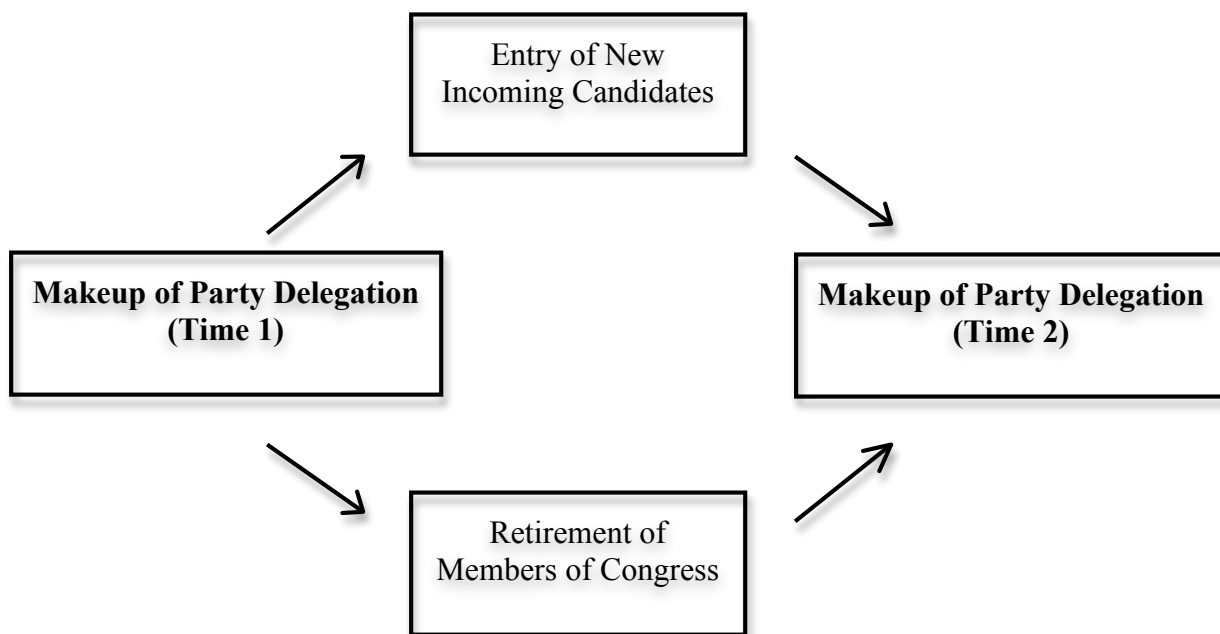
These changing configurations of incentives shed light on how the makeup of party delegations can be transformed across broad swaths of time. In this way, party fit is a story of both institutional development as well as institutional continuity. Political parties have changed in profound ways throughout American history (Aldrich 1995, 2011). Parties in the 21st century of course look very different from parties in the Jacksonian and Progressive eras, and they have sharply shifted course from what George Wallace called the “Tweedledee and Tweedledum” system that reigned just sixty years ago. And parties may experience more dramatic disruptions in certain election cycles and in response to particular electoral swings. But parties stay the same more often than they change, and it is crucial to understand how this long-term stability occurs too. As Thelen (1999, 391) writes, “Arguments about the ‘freezing’ or ‘crystallization’ of particular institutional configurations... obscure more than they reveal unless they are explicitly

linked to complementary arguments that identify the mechanisms of reproduction at work.”

Candidate self-selection is a mechanism of reproduction, yet it is also a mechanism of change.

Figure 2.2 illustrates how this mechanism shapes the historical development of political parties.

Figure 2.2: How Candidate Emergence Matters for Party Development Over Time



Thus, the party fit theoretical framework does more than simply describe either change or stability. It shows how, specifically, the ideological trajectory of a party can be sustained over time and how it can shift courses through time as well. In short, we can learn about broader shifts in party ideology by examining the sources and processes of change, while acknowledging that these processes are part of an institutional arrangement that is for the most part stable. There are a variety of reasons why scholars might choose to focus on one period of time and not another. For example, various data limitations might hinder our ability to test the same hypothesis at different points in time or require the use of a different set of methodological tools

and techniques. My focus here is on partisan shifts in the contemporary political context, and more specifically, on the rise in partisan polarization in Congress.

Party Fit in the Contemporary Context

Over the past fifty years, the two parties have become increasingly homogeneous as well as more ideologically distant from each other, and levels of partisan polarization in Congress are now at a post-Reconstruction high (e.g., McCarty et al. 2006; Poole and Rosenthal 2007).¹¹ A study from the Pew Research Center found that the current 113th Congress has been one of the least productive in history (Desilver 2013). Members of Congress have delayed action on a range of pressing policy matters such as immigration reform, gun control, and education. The dysfunction in Washington has even become a top concern among the public. A Gallup poll conducted during the 2013 government shutdown showed that 33% of Americans cited this dysfunction as the most important problem facing our country today (Newport 2013c).

A longtime member of Congress and a former party recruiter in the 1990s suspected that the dysfunction in Washington is holding individuals back from running for Congress. He also speculated that party recruitment is harder now because serving in Congress is not seen as such a wonderful job, “given all the craziness that’s going on.” The recruiter elaborated, “Their friends and neighbors will say, ‘Why would you want to do that? These people are nuts. They can’t get anything done. Why go up there?’” He then referenced a story about a member of Congress who recently decided to resign from Congress and run for governor:

¹¹ The reputations of both parties have been dramatically affected by the rise in partisan polarization. On a 7-point scale ranging from very liberal to very conservative, Americans rate the Democratic Party as 2.8 and the Republican Party as 5.3 (ANES 2012). It is safe to assume that if the public recognizes these differences in the parties, prospective candidates do as well.

“Why would someone who is highly respected, upwardly mobile in the House of Representatives, and has a chance to move up in leadership walk away from the House? That’s because she’s tired of the place. She thinks these people are nuts; you can’t get anything done. Why not go back and be governor? It’s very interesting. That tells you that something is going on here. If good, responsible members who still have a future decide they don’t want to stay in the House, then [the party] has got to have some recruitment problems right now” (3/1/2013).

A recent article in *RealClearPolitics* reported that even sitting members of Congress are not making the hard sell to potential candidates (Huey-Burns and Conroy 2013). Democratic Party officials recently tried to recruit Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer to run for Max Baucus’s Senate seat in 2014. When members of Congress reached out to Schweitzer, they began in usual fashion by emphasizing all of the good things he could do in Washington. As the members continued, though, their less than favorable attitudes about the job became apparent. Schweitzer recalled them saying that they “kind of hate it” in Washington. The potential candidate concluded, “It’s toxic right now, and it appears it’s going to be toxic for awhile. And I just didn’t need it” (quoted in Huey-Burns and Conroy 2013).

However, a recruiter for the national Republican Party suggested that the political climate is not a hurdle for all prospective candidates, and in fact, that it has spurred the political ambitions of some individuals. When asked if the party has had any problems recruiting candidates because of the hyper-partisanship and government gridlock, he said, “No, the dysfunction is, by many Republicans, viewed as dysfunction not in Washington but dysfunction by a president that won’t lead. That is more of a motivation rather than a way to dissuade based on wanting to change [the president’s] policies” (3/22/2013).

The party fit hypothesis suggests that these dramatic partisan shifts have implications for the types of individuals that run for Congress, encouraging some and discouraging others. With respect to the recent influx of ideologues, one recruiter said, “The Republican Party is getting

more and more conservative and they are attracting more and more of those types of people to run... Similarly, the Democratic Party is going to the left” (3/1/2013). Indeed, ideological moderates are a rarity in the contemporary Congress, and moderates in the congressional pipeline may assume their candidacies are doomed from the start because of their ideological preferences (Brady, Han, and Pope 2007).¹² Moderates in Congress are also more likely to face the threat of “getting primaried” by well-funded ideologues (Boatright 2013).

Even if moderates believe they can win the election, particularly in the case of moderate incumbents, they may be skeptical of their ability to shape the policy agenda. For instance, moderate Republican veteran Olympia Snowe retired from the Senate in 2012, and she made this decision despite the fact that her seat was widely perceived to be safe. In her retirement announcement, Snowe voiced frustration with the partisan politics in Congress and questioned how “productive” another term in the Senate would be. Indeed, party leaders who set the legislative agenda are now ideologues themselves (Heberlig et al. 2006; Jessee and Malhotra 2011), and it is increasingly difficult for moderates to either advance their desired policies or to obtain a leadership position in the legislative chamber. A veteran moderate member put it this way: “If you led a life where you have talent, you can get a job that supports you and your family and be reasonably comfortable, then why would you run for Congress? The answer always was that you do it because the honor of serving and the good that you can do outweighs that cost. For a moderate today, I don’t know if they can say that” (2/28/2013).

Thus, the party fit hypothesis suggests that, in the contemporary context, ideological moderates in the congressional pipeline—liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state

¹² Whether or not ideological moderates would win is a difficult question because they are not running at all. At the very least, if electoral goals were paramount, we would expect to see variation in the candidate pool across congressional districts, and I discuss this more below. Nevertheless, I think this question is of secondary importance. The goal here is to shift the emphasis to the types of individuals who are running for office, because what is certain is that moderates will never win if they do not run.

legislators—are less likely to run for Congress than those at the ideological poles. In addition, ideologically moderate members of Congress—liberal Republicans and conservative Democrats—are expected to be more likely to retire from Congress than those at the poles.

Ideological Outliers and Asymmetric Polarization

It is similarly possible that potential candidates who are too extreme for the party may be dissuaded from running for Congress, but there are a variety of reasons to expect the congressional environment to be more attractive to ideologues than it is to moderates. For instance, ideologues are less likely to be cross-pressured than those in the middle, as their preferences are much closer to their party's position than that of the opposing party. Ideologues are also more likely to obtain a leadership position than members at the ideological center (Heberlig et al. 2006; Jessee and Malhotra 2011). Ideological extremity is therefore not expected to have a negative effect on the probability of running for Congress, although this pattern may emerge among potential candidates who are extreme ideological outliers, such as those who are more extreme than the most conservative Republican and the most liberal Democratic members of Congress. For example, in Shames' (2014) study of political ambition among law, policy, and business students, one MPP student at Harvard said, "Another reason I wouldn't run is I'm too much on the left, so I wouldn't be comfortable. I find that the current left is too centrist; I just wouldn't feel comfortable with that. So people who fit more comfortably within those spheres are more likely to run, I mean, you don't see hardcore environmentalists or libertarians running in a serious way." The main focus here, though, is on ideological variation in the decision to run among potential congressional candidates who comprise the bulk of the candidate pool.

While it is clear that both parties have shifted away from the center, a number of scholars have also argued that polarization is “asymmetric” and that there are distinctions between the two parties (e.g., Carmines 2011; Hacker and Pierson 2005; Mann and Ornstein 2012; McCarty et al. 2006; Skocpol and Williamson 2012). For one, they suggest that the Republican Party has moved further to the right than the Democrat Party has to the left (but see Bonica 2013b). Second, and what is particularly relevant here, the Democratic delegation has remained more ideologically dispersed. Bonica’s (2013b) CFscores show that in the 112th Congress (2011-12), the standard deviation for the Democratic Party was 0.33, compared to 0.24 for Republicans.¹³ The moderate “Blue Dog” Democrats have retained an organized presence in Congress, while the Republicans have all but lost their moderate faction. Between 10 and 20 percent of Republican representatives belonged to the GOP’s right-wing caucus in the 1980s, but nearly 70% of Republicans in the current Congress are members (Mann and Ornstein 2012). As a result, these patterns may be especially pronounced on the Republican side. Because the Democratic Party delegation has remained relatively more heterogeneous than the Republican delegation, there will be fellow members for moderate Democrats to work with on policy issues, and the party delegation may not seem as distant to moderates on the Democratic side.

General Empirical Patterns

The lack of available data has long hindered the study of candidate ideology. Poole and Rosenthal (2007) constructed DW-Nominate scores to trace historical changes in the ideology of members of Congress (Poole and Rosenthal 2007), but there were no measures that placed all congressional candidates, both winners and losers, on a common ideological scale.

¹³ The data are discussed in detail later. For now, it is sufficient to note that the congressional CFscores range from approximately -1.5 to 1.5, with higher values indicating more conservative ideologies.

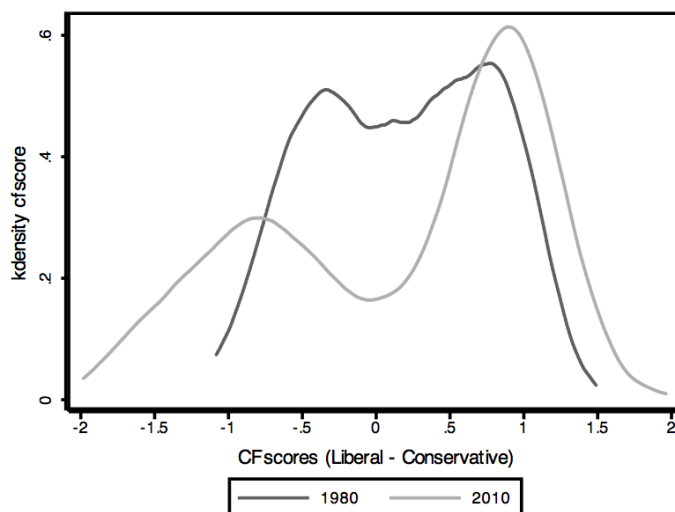
Ansolahehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001) developed the first comprehensive solution to this problem by comparing the policy positions of candidates running in races where the two major party candidates had a roll-call voting record, extending from 1874 to 1996. They supplement these data with candidate responses to Project Vote Smart's National Political Awareness Test (NPAT). Others have done snapshot analyses of candidate ideology that are similar to the NPAT (e.g., Fiorina 1974; Erikson and Wright 1989), and more recently, Burden (2004) conducted the Candidate Ideology Survey (CIS), which asked all major party candidates running in 2000 to place themselves on a left-right ideological scale.

However, these datasets also have important limitations. The snapshot measures do not allow for comparisons in candidate ideology over time, and while Ansolahehere et al. (2001) are able to overcome this problem, their data do not include those candidates who were never elected to Congress. A new dataset developed by Bonica (2010) allows us to address both of these concerns. Bonica (2013b) utilizes campaign finance records from 1980 to 2010 to construct a "Campaign Finance score," or CFscore, for nearly all congressional candidates, winners and losers alike, during this time. While the CFscores do not extend nearly as far back as Ansolahehere et al.'s data, they nevertheless span a sufficiently long time period to allow for historical comparisons across candidates.

The density plots shown in Figure 2.3 show the ideological composition of congressional candidates in 1980 and 2010. The CFscores of all candidates who ran for the House in 2010 are significantly more polarized than the CFscores of candidates who ran in 1980. The "hollowing out" of the electorate identified by Fiorina (2002) appears to have reached beyond the mass public, influencing the candidate sphere as well. The ideological distribution in the 2010 elections is clearly bimodal, with candidates from both parties increasingly coming from the

ideological extremes. This same pattern is apparent among incumbents, challengers, and open-seat candidates. Much like their party delegations in Congress, the pool of Republican candidates is more ideologically homogeneous as well as more conservative. The pool of Democratic candidates has become more liberal over time, but it has also remained relatively more heterogeneous (see also Hacker and Pierson 2005; Bonica 2010; Carmines 2011).

Figure 2.3: Ideological Placement of All Congressional Candidates: 1980 vs. 2010



Source: Campaign Finance scores created by Adam Bonica, Stanford University.

The graph suggests that candidates are no longer converging toward the median as Downs (1957) predicted. It might be tempting to conclude that the 2010 distribution in Figure 2.3 is over representative of outliers, or extreme primary candidates, who not only fail to win the general election but also fail to win the primary. It is certainly the case that ideologues comprise a larger share of the total population of candidates, but it is important to emphasize that they are winning their races as well. The ideological distributions of primary winners are dramatically different in the 1980 and 2010 elections. And while general election winners in 2010 were a

touch more moderate than primary winners, the distributions of primary and general election winners are almost identical (see Figures 2.4 and 2.5). These trends provide support for Fiorina et al.'s (2006) argument about the myth of the polarized electorate: when the citizenry is given polarized choices, they will vote for polarized candidates, regardless of their own preferences.

Figure 2.4: Ideological Placement of Primary Winners: 1980 vs. 2010

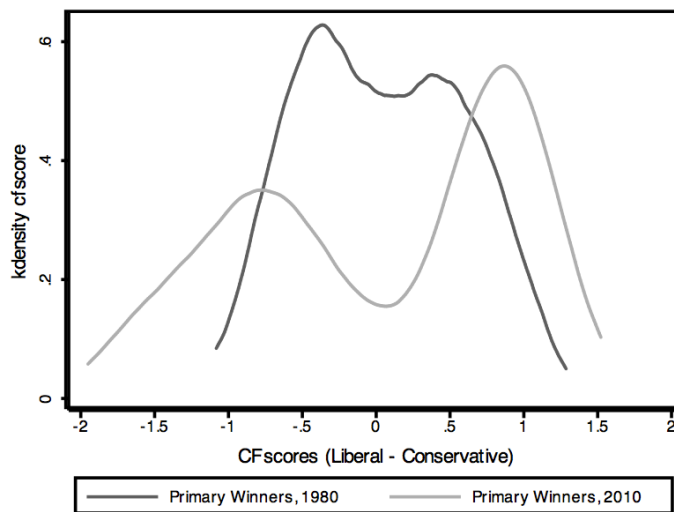
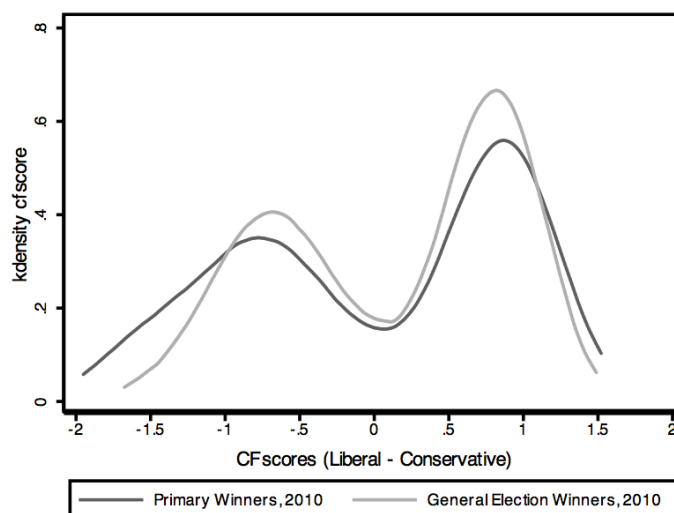


Figure 2.5: Ideological Placement of Primary and General Election Winners: 2010



Source: Campaign Finance scores created by Adam Bonica, Stanford University.

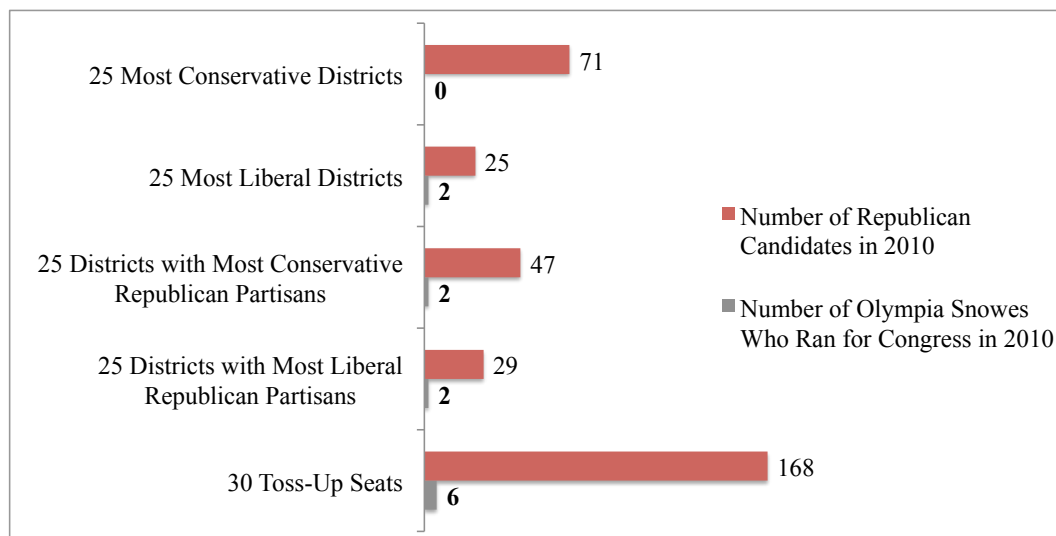
Alternative Logics of Candidate Emergence

There is a host of other, and perhaps more obvious, explanations for what we would expect the ideological makeup of the candidate pool to look like. In fact, classic theories of candidate emergence predict that candidates will reflect the ideology of the median voter (Downs 1957), and we would expect legislators who are “single minded seekers of re-election” to hew closely to the median voter in their district (Mayhew 1974). Thus, although congressional districts have become increasingly homogeneous and voters have become better sorted, we might still expect to see variation across districts in the types of candidates who run. For example, perhaps there will be a greater number of moderate Republican and moderate Democratic candidates in more liberal and conservative congressional districts, respectively. Similarly, there may be fewer moderate Republicans (Democrats) running in the most conservative (liberal) districts. In addition, we might see variation depending on how conservative or liberal party activists are. Liberal Republicans and conservative Democrats may be more likely to run in districts with a more liberal Republican base and a more conservative Democratic base, respectively, and they may be less likely to run in districts with more conservative Republican partisans and more liberal Democratic partisans. Lastly, moderates may be more likely to run in toss-up seats because they believe they will be attract the most support in the general election and they may expect activists to vote strategically.

I briefly examine these various electoral logics with respect to the candidate pool in the 2010 election cycle. I use Tausanovitch and Warshaw’s (2013) estimates of congressional district ideology and the ideology of Republican and Democratic partisans in each district, and I draw on Congressional Quarterly’s list of toss-up seats for that year. Figure 2.6 shows the number of Republican candidates that ran for Congress in 2010 that have the same ideology

score as Olympia Snowe, a former moderate member from Maine who served in Congress for more than 30 years. It is striking how little variation there is across districts. Congressional candidates who resemble Olympia Snowe are not running anywhere, regardless of the makeup of the district, the makeup of party activists, or the closeness of the race. In fact, of the 1075 Republicans who ran for Congress in 2010, only 36, or 3.3% of the candidate pool, had ideology scores that were as or more moderate than Olympia Snowe's.¹⁴ In short, those like Snowe are no longer putting their hats into the ring, and it does not seem to matter whether the district is more or less conservative, whether party activists are more or less conservative, or whether the seat is expected to be a toss-up and thus perhaps more favorable for a moderate candidate.

Figure 2.6: A Look at Republican Candidates Across Congressional Districts



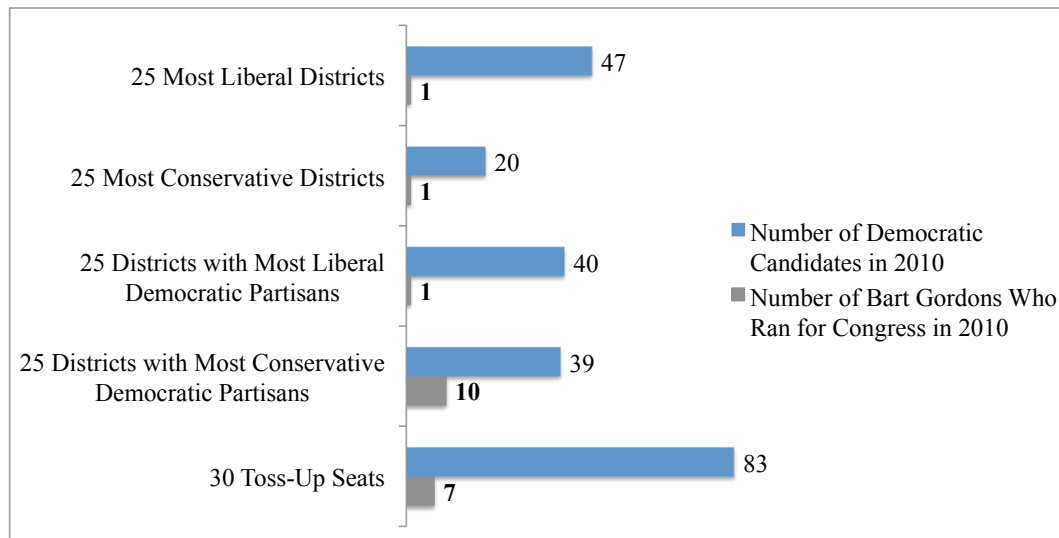
Source: Bonica (2013); Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2013).

Figure 2.7 presents the breakdown for the Democratic candidate pool. The figure shows the number of Democratic candidates that ran for Congress in 2010 that have the same ideology

¹⁴ There is no shortage of moderates who are well situated run for Congress. Between 2000 and 2010, 18% of Republican state legislators had ideology scores that are as or more moderate than Snowe's.

score as Bart Gordon, a former Blue Dog from Tennessee who held congressional office for 25 years. The numbers in Figure 2.7 echo those on the Republican side. There are a few more congressional candidates who resemble Bart Gordon in districts with the most conservative Democratic partisans, but the general patterns are the same: the Bart Gordons are no longer running for Congress, and there is again little variation across districts. Of the 717 Democrats who ran for Congress in 2010, a mere 61, or 8.5%, had ideology scores that were as or more moderate than Bart Gordon's.¹⁵

Figure 2.7: A Look at Democratic Candidates Across Congressional Districts



Source: Bonica (2013); Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2013).

In short, it is less clear how well pure electoral-based logics can explain current patterns of candidate entry. At the very least, we would expect to see more variation in the ideology of congressional candidates across districts. Perhaps the popular narratives around the threat of “being primaried” as well as the influence of the Tea Party, Club for Growth, EMILY’s List, and

¹⁵ The number of moderate Democrats in the pipeline is even larger than the number of moderate Republicans during this time. An amazing 37% of Democratic state legislators had ideology scores that were as or more moderate than Gordon’s.

Americans for Democratic Action has discouraged moderates from running for office, even in districts where they could or would at least be more likely to win. While long-standing theories of candidate emergence expect candidates to hew to the ideological center, we know that newly elected members of Congress come increasingly from the ideological poles. Scholars must begin to explore how candidate ideology and her ideological fit with the party delegation matter for the decision to run for elective office.

Why Party Fit Matters for the Partisan Disparity in Women's Representation

With respect to the gender literature, Elder (2012) has suggested that the distinct cultures of the two parties foster the representation of Democratic women and inhibit the representation of Republican women. Party reputation here is similar to Elder's use of party culture, but the concept of party fit differs in that it emphasizes the interaction between the candidate and the party. The added value of party fit is threefold. First, as described above, the theoretical framework is gender-neutral. It therefore sheds light on variation in political ambition and party recruitment across both male and female candidates. This is important as it allows us to account for within-party variation in candidate emergence and explain why some women (and some men) run for office and others do not. Second, it offers an explanation for the changing ideological profile of women in Congress. Third and perhaps most importantly, it allows for a dynamic understanding of female representation that varies over time and across contexts. One of the central components of the party fit argument is that the decision to run for office is embedded in a larger historical, institutional, and political context, and it is crucial that we examine how changes in the incentive structure matter for candidate emergence. A key part of this is that these changes in incentives may affect the representation of men and women differently.

Again, the theoretical expectations outlined above are not gender-specific, meaning that the party fit hypothesis is expected to work in similar ways for men and women. However, the argument has important implications for the partisan representation of women in Congress. Because the party fit framework emphasizes the mechanisms that underlie broader changes in congressional representation, there are two main reasons why recent partisan shifts are expected to have a disproportionate effect on the representation of Republican women. The first concerns the ideological distribution of women in the pool of potential candidates, and the second concerns the ideological distribution of women in the pool of congressional incumbents.

First, Republican women in the congressional pipeline are more liberal than their male co-partisans (e.g., Carroll 2003; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013; Epstein, Niemi, and Powell 2005; Poggione 2004; but see Hogan 2008).¹⁶ A recent study conducted by scholars at the Center for American Women in Politics shows that Republican women in state legislative office are nearly twice as likely as Republican men to identify as liberal, slightly liberal, or middle of the road (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). On top of this, voters perceive women candidates to be more liberal than they actually are (Koch 2002). And perhaps most importantly, there is a dearth of conservative Republican women in state legislative office.¹⁷ To be sure, the number of female Republican state legislators is small, regardless of ideology. But in both of the state legislator datasets used here, conservative male state legislators outnumber conservative female state legislators almost seven to one. While traditional pipeline explanations for women's

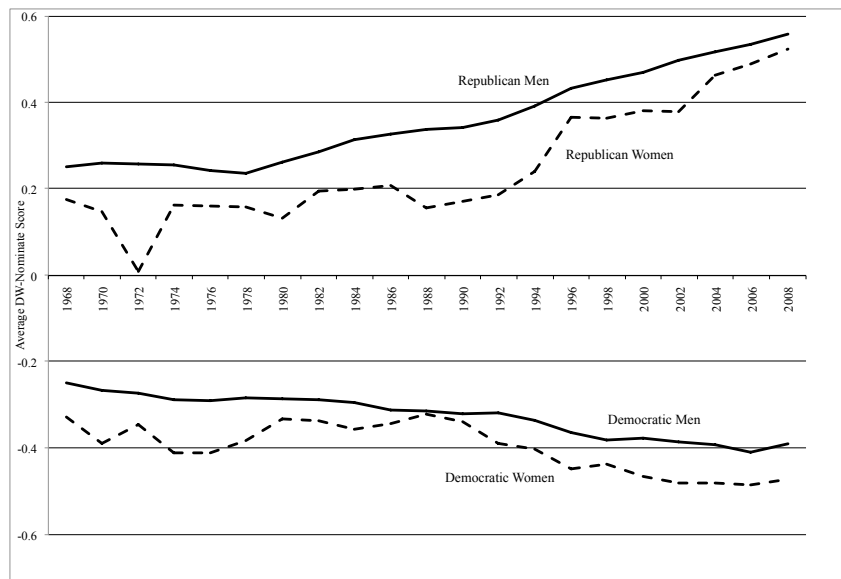
¹⁶ Carroll (2003) suggests this is changing, with women becoming increasingly conservative. In a comprehensive analysis of state legislators, Osborn (2012) shows that partisanship matters much more than gender for understanding how legislators address women's issues. This pattern could be explained as an eventual consequence of party fit.

¹⁷ My interest is in the available candidate pool, so why there are so few conservative Republican women state legislators is not of critical importance. However, the conservative shift among GOP female state legislators is consistent with the argument here (Carroll 2003; Osborn 2012).

underrepresentation have all been ideology-blind to date, the shortage of conservative Republican women in state legislative office is central to the party fit argument.

Second, Republican women in Congress have historically been more liberal than their male counterparts, and they served as a moderate faction within the GOP for the bulk of the late twentieth century. As shown in Figure 2.8, the gender gap in ideology persisted on the Republican side until the late-1990s, but it has diminished in recent years. In the 108th and 109th Congresses (2003-07), the voting record of Republican women was indistinguishable from that of their male partisans (Frederick 2009), and in the 110th Congress, Republican women were as or more loyal to the party as Republican men (Pearson 2010). In the words of one former GOP congresswoman, “When you look at who’s there now, I don’t think there’s one Republican woman who isn’t hardcore conservative. We were moderates. That’s who we were” (2/7/2013). The party fit hypothesis suggests that this moderate faction was less likely to seek re-election as the GOP became increasingly homogenous and conservative. The shrinking ideological gap between Republican women and men is in accordance with this prediction.

Figure 2.8: Average DW-Nominate Scores, By Gender and Party (1968-2008)



Source: Poole and Rosenthal (2007). Data accessed from www.voteview.com.

These gendered ideological disparities are evident in both parties, and Democratic women in Congress are still to the left of their male co-partisans. Moreover, female Democratic state legislators are also less likely to be ideologically moderate than Democratic men (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). Because of this, the rise in partisan polarization is expected to differentially affect the representation of Republican and Democratic women. A shift to the left by the Democratic Party might even benefit Democratic women (see also Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013), and there is evidence suggesting that Democratic women are more likely to win their primaries than Democratic men (Lawless and Pearson 2008). My concern here, though, is mostly on the plateau in the representation of Republican women. Scholars have long predicted women's representation to increase over time, so the growth on the Democratic side is less puzzling, but it is possible that polarization has spurred this "true" rate of growth that we would expect absent the rise in polarization.

As noted above, the theoretical expectations of the party fit hypothesis are the same for men and women, but it is worth considering whether there are additional gendered effects that hinder either moderate Republican women or conservative Republican women from running for Congress. For example, Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) find that female state legislators are more motivated by policy issues than their male counterparts. Indeed, one of the former GOP congresswomen I interviewed said, “When you ask women why they run, they have a reason. Women will do it because they want to accomplish something. With men, it’s power. Maybe there’s something else, but it’s power” (1/22/2013). If policy goals are more important to women and it is more difficult for moderates to achieve their policy goals, then moderate Republican women may be less likely to run for office than moderate Republican men. Or perhaps both conservative and moderate female Republican potential candidates believe it will be more difficult for women to achieve their goals in the GOP because of the party’s reputation with respect to women. Indeed, if there were a conventional wisdom for why there are so few Republican women in office, the “sexist Republican Party” narrative would probably win out.

Both of these scenarios are plausible, but the empirical evidence to support them is limited at best. For one, moderate Republican men are also avoiding Congress, and they report similar levels of disinterest in a congressional career. In addition, conservative Republican women are running for and staying in congressional office at similar rates as their conservative male co-partisans. Nevertheless, it is almost certainly the case that gender and ideology interact in a variety of ways, which at times may hinder women but perhaps even help them. I address the interaction between ideology and gender at various points in the chapters to follow, but the general conclusion is that ideology is much more important for helping us to understand the persistent dearth of Republican women in congressional office.

In sum, gender scholars have largely focused on comparisons between male and female candidates, but as Schreiber (2012, 550) notes, “We know little about the differences among women who seek elective positions of power.” The party fit framework offers an ideological rationale for how the GOP’s reputation might operate differently across Republican women, attracting conservative women and deterring moderate women from running for office. It does not preclude the possibility that the Republican Party can actively recruit (conservative) women candidates, and if the GOP decides it is worthwhile to run more women, there are plenty of conservative women in the public it could recruit. The argument here is quite different, though. The theory suggests that the probability that a “Republican type” will be elected to Congress and be a woman is low, because there is a dearth of conservative Republican women in state legislative and congressional office who are well positioned to run. Simply put, there are many more Republican men who satisfy this condition, which makes them much more likely to seek a congressional seat. The next step is to test the party fit hypothesis by exploring ideological differences among state legislators who run for Congress and ideological differences among members of Congress who decide to retire from political office.

Chapter 3: Ideological Moderates Won't Run for Congress

RealClearPolitics asked Jack Latvala, the veteran state legislator who opted not to run for Congress, why he passed on the opportunity. Latvala offered what *RealClearPolitics* called a “more basic explanation” for staying put in his state legislative seat: “I don’t think I’d have fun in Washington. I know it might be politically incorrect to say that they’re beyond help up there, but it certainly doesn’t look encouraging” (Huey-Burns and Conroy 2013). Latvala’s assessment, at least for some members, is exactly right. One moderate Republican that I interviewed echoed this sentiment: “It’s not fun anymore. Your job is not supposed to be fun like going to an amusement park, but it should be pleasant. Members are saying it’s not pleasant anymore. [Representatives now] have such intense feelings. You’re viewed like a heretic by people who have a different point of view than you. That’s not very good, not very healthy for the republic” (1/14/2013).

Another moderate who had served in Congress for nearly two decades remarked, “The House of Representatives is supposed to look like America. It’s not supposed to look like the most conservative wing of the Republican Party and the most liberal wing of the Democratic Party. Whether they like it or not, some of America isn’t bright red or bright blue” (2/28/2013). The quality of political representation is compromised when only a narrow ideological subset of individuals is willing to engage in electoral contests. Scholars of legislative representation and partisan polarization must turn their attention to questions of candidate emergence to understand why some individuals seek elective office and others do not. If the only candidates who are willing to run for office are as extreme as the rascals in office, this has serious consequences for the representation of those in the middle, which includes the majority of the American people.

Partisan polarization has been one of the most prominent topics in congressional scholarship over the past decade. Those in the ideological middle have all but vanished from office, and Congress is currently characterized by what Bafumi and Herron (2010) call “leapfrog representation,” with ideological extremists being replaced by other extremists. As discussed above, while both parties have moved away from the center, scholars have also argued that polarization is “asymmetric” and that the Republican Party has shifted further to the right than the Democratic Party has to the left (e.g., Carmines 2011; Hacker and Pierson 2005; Mann and Ornstein 2012; McCarty et al. 2006; Skocpol and Williamson 2012). Studies of member ideology show that replacement processes are the primary driver behind the rise in polarization (Fleisher and Bond 2004; Theriault 2006) and asymmetric polarization (Carmines 2011), but we know little about why these replacements increasingly come from the ideological poles.

The Decline of Moderates in the U.S. Congress

Scholars have focused on two types of explanations for the decline of moderates in Congress. One set of explanations highlights various ideological shifts in the electorate. First, Southern constituencies became less homogeneously conservative following the passage of the Voting Rights Act, which enfranchised many African American voters who supported the Democratic Party (Aldrich 2011; Rohde 1991). Both parties gradually lost their moderate factions, with conservative whites in the South abandoning the Democrats and liberals in the Northeast leaving the Republicans. Second, the electoral bases of the two parties shifted from being diverse to more uniform (Fleisher and Bond 2004; Stonecash et al. 2003). Despite the dispute over mass polarization (Abramowitz 2010; Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Fiorina et al. 2006), most agree that voters are better sorted along party lines and that they increasingly

match their partisanship with their ideological preferences (Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2009). Third, party activists have become more extreme in their political preferences (Fiorina et al. 2006; Layman and Carsey 2002; Layman et al. 2010; Theriault 2008). Because activists participate in primaries, contribute money to candidates, and spend their time working on campaigns, they have a greater impact on the electoral process than ordinary voters. Finally, while redistricting has likely had the smallest effect, changes made in district boundaries have also contributed to the polarization of constituencies, with districts that experience serious revisions becoming even more polarized (Theriault 2008; Carson et al. 2007).

The other set of explanations for polarization instead highlights changes that have occurred within Congress. Increased levels of party homogeneity have supplied the leadership with tools to foster party discipline and advance the party's agenda (Aldrich 2011; Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Rohde 1991). Newly empowered party leaders have assumed greater responsibility in allocating committee assignments, setting the legislative agenda, and structuring debate on the floor (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Sinclair 2006). Majority party leaders draw extensively on legislative procedure to exert their will, and the resulting polarization on procedural issues has exacerbated the disparity between the two parties (Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008). Moreover, party leaders are more extreme than the median member of the party caucus (Grofman et al. 2002; Heberlig et al. 2006; Jessee and Malhotra 2011), and they may move the party's agenda closer to their own preferences (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Roberts and Smith 2003).

While mass-level and elite-level explanations have helped us to better understand the origins of partisan polarization, it is less clear how well they can explain why polarization is growing with each election cycle. Scholars have recently begun to test whether the electoral mechanisms that are assumed to be causing polarization are in fact causing polarization. They

have come up short on multiple fronts. First, there has been a lot of popular and scholarly discussion around the issue of gerrymandering. The basic logic is that districts have become increasingly safe, competition has declined, and only conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats can win in conservative and liberal districts. Politicians no longer need to appeal to moderates and independents, and they can instead pander to their base. In actuality, however, political scientists suggest that gerrymandering matters anywhere from a little bit to not at all (Carson et al. 2007; McCarty et al. 2009; Theriault 2008). McCarty et al. (2009) find that polarization is a function of the differences in how Republicans and Democrats represent the same districts, rather than a function of which districts each party represents or the distribution of constituency preferences. And there is the obvious counterpoint of the Senate, where the parties have also polarized but there is of course no redistricting.

Another commonly cited electoral culprit for the rise in polarization points to party primaries. The logic is similar: safe districts suggest that the heart of the competition is at the primary stage. Candidates try to obtain votes from extreme party activists, and politicians are therefore responsive to unrepresentative primary voters. However, there is limited empirical support for claim that the primary electorate makes demands on candidates to move to the extremes. There is little evidence that the introduction of primary elections, the level of primary turnout, or the threat of primary competition is associated with partisan polarization in roll-call voting (Hirano et al. 2009). Moreover, there is no relationship between primary rules and polarization. Closed primaries, or those in which only party members can vote, do not produce more extreme candidates than open primaries (McGhee et al. 2013). In short, while it is widely assumed that the usual suspects—gerrymandering, primaries, and extreme party activists—are the mechanisms that are driving recent patterns of polarization, the evidence to support this claim

is seriously lacking. We are still searching for reasons as to why Congress is becoming more and more polarized with almost each election cycle. What is clear is that newly elected congressional candidates are coming increasingly from the ideological poles, and scholars must begin to analyze how candidate self-selection processes contribute to these trends.

How State Legislators Perceive the Congressional Environment

This chapter contributes to the polarization literature by highlighting ideological variation in the types of candidates who run for Congress. I focus here on potential candidates in the congressional pipeline. State legislative office is a well-known springboard to Congress (Jacobson and Kernell 1983), and 51% of those who served in Congress between 1999 and 2008 had prior state legislative experience (Carnes 2012). It is therefore ideal to test the party fit hypothesis on state legislators because they are well situated to run for Congress.¹⁸ Again, the central claim is that ideological conformity with the party's ideological reputation influences the decision to run for office. Potential candidates draw on this reputation to determine if they can achieve their electoral and policy goals and to decide whether to run for office. The party fit hypothesis suggests that in the contemporary political context, partisan polarization in Congress has discouraged ideological moderates in the pipeline from pursuing a congressional career.

I first draw on data from a national survey of state legislators conducted for the Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone and Maisel 2003; Stone et al. 2004). The CES data are unique in that they allow for an analysis of the perceptions of state legislators. The survey was mailed to state legislators whose districts overlap with 200 randomly selected congressional districts in 41 states. There are a total of 569 state legislators, 262 Republicans and 307

¹⁸ Party fit here is technically congressional party fit. More broadly, the theory refers to the party to which a candidate would belong upon election; I simply use party fit to capture the general concept.

Democrats, in the sample used here.¹⁹ Again, the party fit hypothesis suggests that ideological moderates in the pipeline—liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state legislators—are less likely to believe they can win the primary and less likely to value a seat in the U.S. House than those at the poles. The magnitude of the effect may differ by party due to variation in the ideological heterogeneity of the Republican and Democratic parties.

I use an OLS model to examine how party fit shapes state legislators' perceived chance of winning the primary and their value of a seat in the U.S. House. The dependent variables capture whether they believe they can achieve their electoral and non-electoral goals.²⁰ The first dependent variable is a direct measure of state legislators' perceived chance of winning the primary.²¹ State legislators rated their chance of winning the party nomination if they ran for Congress in the foreseeable future. Following Maestas et al. (2006), the response is scaled as a “pseudo-probability” that ranges from 0.01 to 0.99 (extremely unlikely to extremely likely). The second dependent variable concerns the non-electoral goals that Fenno (1973) highlighted, measured as state legislators' value of a seat in the U.S. House. As in Maestas et al. (2006), the value of a House seat is measured in relative terms: state legislators rated the prestige and effectiveness of a career in Congress and their career in the state legislature, and the difference

¹⁹ The data are drawn from the 1998 wave of the Candidate Emergence Study. The specific states are not identified in the publicly available data. The survey was mailed to 2,714 state legislators, and 874 of them responded, for a response rate of 32.2% (see Maestas et al. 2006, 199). Due to missing data, there are 597 respondents in the Maestas et al. (2006) study, compared to 569 used here; the decrease is because of the inclusion of ideology. I am not able to use the 2000 wave of the state legislator data, as ideology was not included in the survey. Maestas et al. (2006) also use only the 1998 wave in their study of state legislators.

²⁰ I follow the coding procedures used in the Maestas et al. (2006) study unless noted otherwise. All descriptive statistics are provided in Supplementary Appendix A.1.

²¹ I also used “Chance of Winning the Primary and General Election,” but I focus on the primary because candidates must first obtain support from primary voters. In addition, I used “Attraction to a House Career” as a dependent variable, but these better capture the electoral and non-electoral mechanisms that underlie political ambition.

between these scores is the relative value of a seat in the House. Although this measurement might not exclusively capture policy impact and influence in the chamber, it is a good proxy for potential candidates' expected ability to achieve their non-electoral goals. The main independent variable of interest is the state legislator's self-reported ideology, which ranges from very liberal to very conservative. The variable is coded so that higher values correspond to Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism.²²

I control for several variables used by Maestas et al. (2006) in their study of political ambition, as the factors that shape attraction to a House career might also influence state legislators' perceived chance of winning the primary and their reported value of a House seat. State legislators who have been contacted by the party and those who believe they can raise money to fund their campaigns are expected to give higher evaluations of their perceived chance of winning and their value of a House seat. Respondents who are older as well as female state legislators may have more negative assessments of their chance of winning and report lower values of a House seat. State legislators with more support from outside groups and those who face strong incumbents are expected to be more and less likely, respectively, to believe they can achieve their goals. Not all of the controls are expected to have the same effect on both of the dependent variables, however. State legislators who perceive the district partisanship to be favorable may rate the value of the seat to be higher but assess their chance of winning to be lower due to increased primary competition. Conversely, those who have served more terms in state legislative office and those in professionalized state legislatures may report a higher chance of winning but a lower seat value given the costs of leaving the state legislature.

²² I also ran the models with respondents' positions on four policy issues that are included in both of the party platforms. Respondents are coded as non-conformists if they are indifferent or oppose the position in their party's platform on an issue and conformists if they favor their party's position (1 and 0, respectively). These values were summed across the policies; lower (higher) values indicate more (less) conformity with the party. The results are provided in Supplementary Appendix A.2.

Results

The results with the CES data are presented in Table 3.1 below. This section focuses on the main variable of interest, state legislator ideology, and then briefly reports the results on the control variables. The Republican model is discussed first and the Democratic model second.

Table 3.1: The Determinants of State Legislators' Perceived Ability to Achieve their Electoral and Policy Goals, By Party

| | Republican State Legislators | | Democratic State Legislators | |
|---|---|------------------------|---|------------------------|
| | Chance of Winning Primary | Value of House Seat | Chance of Winning Primary | Value of House Seat |
| Self-Reported Ideology (Republican Liberalism; Democratic Conservatism) | -0.04* (0.02) | -0.44* (0.18) | -0.01 (0.02) | 0.16 (0.20) |
| Favorable District Partisanship | -0.06† (0.04) | -0.53 (0.38) | -0.07* (0.03) | 0.35 (0.38) |
| Ability to Raise Money | 0.05* (0.02) | -0.16 (0.21) | 0.03 (0.02) | -0.43* (0.20) |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.06** (0.02) | 0.12 (0.19) | 0.07** (0.02) | -0.09 (0.19) |
| Terms in State Legislative Office | -0.01 (0.02) | -0.13 (0.19) | -0.02 (0.02) | -0.29 (0.20) |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 0.05** (0.02) | -0.18 (0.19) | 0.05** (0.02) | -0.29 (0.19) |
| Incumbent Strength | -0.01 (0.02) | 0.36† (0.19) | -0.05** (0.02) | 0.23 (0.19) |
| Support from Outside Groups | 0.06** (0.02) | 0.10 (0.20) | -0.01 (0.02) | 0.28 (0.19) |
| Female | 0.02 (0.05) | -0.87 (0.53) | -0.04 (0.04) | -0.56 (0.44) |
| Age | -0.10** (0.02) | 0.07 (0.19) | -0.10** (0.02) | 0.37† (0.20) |
| Constant | 0.53** (0.03) | 0.50† (0.30) | 0.57** (.03) | -0.97** (0.32) |
| Number of Observations | 262 | 262 | 307 | 307 |
| R ² | 0.31 | 0.07 | 0.28 | 0.06 |

Source: 1998 Wave of the Candidate Emergence Study (Stone and Maisel 2003; Stone et al. 2004; Maestas et al. 2006). Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

**=p<0.01, *=p<0.05, †=p<0.10.

The key result in the Republican model is that liberal Republicans in the congressional pipeline are less likely to believe they can achieve their electoral and policy goals than those with more conservative preferences.²³ First, liberal Republican state legislators perceive their chance of winning the primary to be lower, on average, than conservative Republicans. The size of this effect ranks highly in comparison to the control variables.²⁴ A one-unit increase in Republican liberalism results in a four percentage point decline in their perceived chance of winning the primary. Similarly, a standard deviation increase in party recruitment and support from outside groups leads to a six percentage point rise in state legislators' expected chance of winning, and the effect of a one-unit increase in the ability to raise money and state legislative professionalization is five percentage points. In addition, a standard deviation increase in age and a shift from an unfavorable to a favorable district partisan balance leads to a ten and six percentage point decrease in their perceived chance of winning, respectively.²⁵ Second, ideology is also a significant predictor of Republican state legislators' reported value of a congressional seat, with liberal Republicans assessing the relative value of a House seat to be lower than conservative Republicans. A standard deviation increase in being ideologically moderate results

²³ The relationship between ideology and the two dependent variables is equally strong when the controls are omitted from the models, and the results remain the same when "Chance of Winning the Primary and General" is the dependent variable. Also, the results are similar when policy preferences are used instead of ideology. Republican state legislators with preferences that do not conform to the party's platform are less likely to believe they can achieve their electoral and non-electoral goals than those with preferences that do (see Supplementary Appendix A.2).

²⁴ Predictor variables were standardized to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

²⁵ I am not able to test whether respondents self-select out of running or are gate-kept out by party leaders, but I expect both mechanisms to be at work. Among very conservative and conservative Republicans, 4.4% reported being contacted by the party, versus 1.8% of those with more liberal preferences, which conforms to the argument here. In terms of the model, this would lead me to underestimate the effect of ideology as candidate ideology might have an influence on party recruitment but not vice versa, as the ideology of most legislators does not change significantly over time (Poole and Rosenthal 2007).

in nearly a half-point decline in state legislators' reported value of a congressional seat, or approximately 2.2% of the total range of the scale.

Among Democratic state legislators, the results suggest that conservatives and liberals are statistically indistinguishable in terms of their perceived chance of winning the primary and their reported value of a seat in the U.S. House. However, the lack of significance among Democrats makes sense given the timing of the survey. This wave of the CES survey was conducted in 1998, and there were important ideological differences between the parties at that point. In the 105th Congress (1997-98), the median House Republican had a CFscore of 0.80 and the median Democrat had a score of -0.65, compared to 0.94 and -0.79 for the median Republican and Democrat, respectively, in the 112th Congress (2011-12) (Bonica 2013b). Also, the standard deviation of the GOP in the 105th Congress was 0.27, whereas the Democratic Party had a standard deviation of 0.33. Conservative Democrats were thus a better fit for the party in the late 1990s, and the party might not have seemed as distant because of the relative heterogeneity of the party caucus. The null results among Democratic state legislators are therefore not surprising given the ideological makeup of the Democratic Party at the time of the survey.

The results on the control variables are similar to those in the Republican models.²⁶ State legislators who were contacted by the political party and those in more professionalized state legislatures believe they are more likely to win the primary. Also, Democratic state legislators rate their chance of victory to be lower when the incumbent is strong, and respondents who are older as well as those who deem the partisan balance of their districts to be favorable say they are less likely to win the primary. Those who are older also assess the value of a seat in the House to

²⁶ When the sample is not split along party lines, nearly all of the control variables conform to the expectations in the Data and Method section (see Supplementary Appendix A.3).

be lower ($p < 0.10$), and contrary to expectations, the relationship between state legislators' ability to raise money and their reported value of a House seat is negative.

In sum, traditional factors such as party recruitment, past political experience, and the ability to garner support from voters, donors, and outside groups matter in clear ways for whether state legislators believe they can achieve their electoral and policy goals. However, scholars have overlooked how state legislators' ideological congruence—or lack thereof—with their party's ideological reputation may also influence candidate emergence. The findings suggest that liberal Republicans in the pipeline are less likely to believe they can achieve their electoral and policy goals than conservatives in the pipeline. Conservative and liberal Democrats in the pipeline are statistically indistinguishable in terms of their perceived chance of winning the primary and their reported value of a House seat, but this makes sense given the ideological makeup of the Democratic Party at the time of the survey.

The Implications of Party Fit for Candidate Emergence

The CES data help to shed light on the perceptions of state legislators, but it would also be useful to analyze the ideological profile of state legislators who decide to run for Congress, as we are ultimately interested in how patterns of candidate self-selection contribute to partisan polarization. In addition, because the replacement of moderates has occurred gradually and over multiple election cycles, it would be ideal to test the party fit hypothesis with more recent data and data that span a longer time period. A new dataset created by Bonica (2013b) allows us to do both. Bonica (2013b) uses campaign finance records from state and federal elections to estimate the ideology of a wide range of political actors, including members of Congress, state legislators, interest groups, and individual donors. Most importantly here, the dataset includes

ideal points for state legislators who did and did not run for Congress from 2000 to 2010.²⁷ This enables a test of party fit specifically in the polarized context, as partisan polarization had become a defining characteristic of Congress during these years.²⁸

First, though, it is possible that the pool of congressional candidates with state legislative backgrounds varies by party. If successful Republican candidates are less likely to have previous state legislative experience or if Republican candidates are more likely to be political amateurs, an analysis of state legislators may be less relevant for patterns of polarization in Congress. However, there is little evidence of such partisan differences either among the pool of successful candidates or the full pool of congressional candidates. The same proportions of Democrats and Republicans in Congress—successful candidates—have previous state legislative experience (50.9% of Democrats and 51.5% of Republicans) (Carnes 2012). Moreover, in the full pool of successful and unsuccessful non-incumbent candidates who ran for Congress from 2000 to 2010 (Bonica 2013b), 17% of Republicans and 15% of Democrats had state legislative backgrounds.

²⁷ The goal was to restrict the sample to “quality congressional candidates” who do and do not run for Congress (Jacobson and Kernell 1983). Thus, the sample includes state legislative incumbents who make their first run for Congress and state legislative incumbents who run for the state legislature again but could have run for Congress. The sample excludes first-time state legislative candidates who are not yet quality candidates, those who have previously run for the state legislature and lost, as well as state legislators who seek higher state legislative office. The sample also excludes state legislative incumbents who have previously run for Congress, as the aim is to compare the decision to run for Congress across similarly situated state legislators.

²⁸ Bonica’s state legislator estimates are available from 1990 to 2010, but I restrict the sample from 2000 to 2010. The number of state legislative candidates who filed with the FEC was significantly lower prior to 2000, so the number of state legislators in the dataset who could have run for office was unreasonably low. Specifically, there are 8,027 observations in the dataset between 1990 and 1998, compared to 31,030 between 2000 and 2010. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, there are 7,300 state legislators nationwide in a given election cycle, so the latter figure is a much closer approximation of the eligible pool of state legislators (NCSL 2013).

This suggests that state legislators are an appropriate sample from which to assess the broader implications of party fit for changes in congressional polarization.²⁹

I use a logistic regression to estimate the relationship between state legislator ideology and her decision to run for Congress. The Republican model includes 14,459 observations and the Democratic model includes 16,571 observations.³⁰ The dependent variable is coded 1 if the state legislator runs for Congress in a given year and 0 if she runs for the state legislature again. The primary independent variable is the ideology of the state legislator, coded so that higher values correspond to Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism.³¹ The party fit hypothesis suggests that Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism have a negative effect on candidate emergence: the more liberal (conservative) the Republican (Democratic) state legislator, the less likely she is to run for Congress. Again, given that the Democratic Party has

²⁹ I discuss the proportion of Republican and Democratic women in the state legislative pools in the next chapter, but it is beyond the scope of the analysis here, which is concerned specifically with ideology.

³⁰ The state legislators represent 49 states; Nebraska is excluded because its legislature is non-partisan. Of the pool of Republican state legislators who were well situated for Congress in a given election year from 2000 to 2010, 290 (2.0%) ran for Congress and 14,169 did not. In the pool of Democratic state legislators, 208 (1.3%) ran for Congress and 16,363 did not. I also ran a rare event logistic regression, and the results are identical. In addition, I ran the model with state fixed effects, and the results remain the same. State fixed effects are not included here because doing so leads to a sizeable decrease in the number of observations, but year fixed effects are included.

³¹ The state legislator ideology data are shown descriptively in Supplementary Appendix A.4. I also measured party fit as the difference between the state legislator's ideology and the congressional party median (i.e., the absolute distance between her CFscore and the CFscore of the party median) and as the state legislator's relative closeness to her party in Congress (i.e., the absolute value of a state legislator's distance from her party median subtracted from the absolute value of her distance from the opposing party median) (see Supplementary Appendix A.5). I use state legislator ideology here, as the main goal is to highlight how candidate self-selection matters for patterns of partisan polarization in Congress.

remained relatively more ideologically heterogeneous during this time, the magnitude of the effect may differ by party.³²

The model includes controls for a variety of electoral, institutional, and partisan factors. To account for district-level factors, I control for whether there was an incumbent running for re-election in the state legislator's congressional district, as well as the ideology of the state legislator's congressional district (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2013).³³ I used Bonica's (2013b) data to calculate the average amount of money individuals raised as state legislators, as this likely corresponds to their ability to fund a congressional campaign. I also control for the number of times individuals sought state legislative office and the gender of the state legislator. State legislative professionalization is measured with the Squire (2007) index, and I include measures of partisan control of the state legislature (Klarner 2013) and whether the state legislature has term limits. Lastly, I include a dummy variable for Republican (Democratic) state legislators who are more extreme than the most conservative Republican (liberal Democratic) member of Congress to account for ideological outliers.

The results are presented in Table 3.2 below. Of most importance is the negative coefficient on the party fit variable.³⁴ As expected, Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism has a negative effect on candidate emergence: the more liberal the Republican state

³² While the theory also posits a role for the ideological heterogeneity of the party, the standard deviation of the CFscores of either party do not vary sufficiently during the time frame here to include them in the model.

³³ I used Census data to assign state legislative districts (SLD) to their corresponding congressional district (CD). For SLDs that fall into more than one CD, I used the CD in which their SLD comprised a larger portion of the CD population. The incumbency data were generously provided by Gary Jacobson.

³⁴ The models with the alternative specifications of party fit tell the same story: state legislators who are further from the congressional party median are less likely to run for Congress, and state legislators who are relatively closer to their own party median are more likely to do so (Supplementary Appendix A.5).

legislator, the less likely she is to run for Congress; the more conservative the Democratic state legislator, the less likely she is to do so.³⁵

Table 3.2: The Determinants of Running for Congress, By Party (2000-2010)

| | Republican State Legislators | Democratic State Legislators |
|--|---|---|
| State Legislator Ideology (Republican Liberalism; Democratic Conservatism) | -2.94** (0.27) | -2.16** (0.23) |
| Incumbent Running in Congressional District | -2.36** (0.13) | -2.37** (0.17) |
| Ideology of Congressional District (Higher=Conservative) | -1.81** (0.30) | 0.62 (0.33) |
| Log of Mean Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 0.47** (0.06) | 0.54** (0.07) |
| Number of Times Run for State Legislature | 0.34** (0.04) | 0.30** (0.05) |
| Female | -0.14 (0.17) | -0.35* (0.16) |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 1.73** (0.58) | 0.62 (0.69) |
| In State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.76** (0.15) | 0.89** (0.18) |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.75** (0.17) | -0.25 (0.23) |
| Extreme Ideologue | -0.37 (1.20) | -0.51 (0.50) |
| Constant | -11.69** (0.81) | -11.42** (0.81) |
| Number of Observations | 14,459 | 16,571 |
| Log-Likelihood | -1119.02 | -871.67 |

Source: State legislator estimates are from Bonica (2013b).

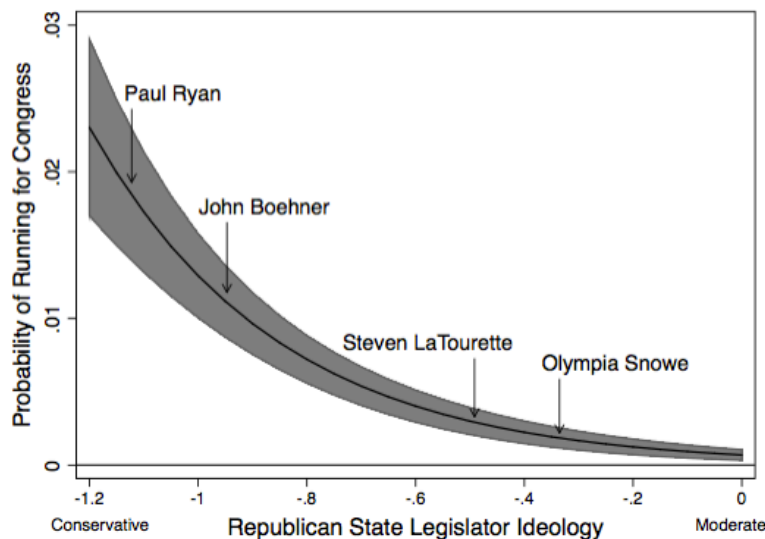
Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by individual in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the incumbent state legislator ran for Congress and 0 if the incumbent state legislator instead ran for the state legislature. **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

³⁵ In the graphs shown here, the probability of running for Congress is highest among state legislators at the extremes, though this probability eventually decreases among very extreme ideologues. These graphs are provided in Supplementary Appendix A.6. The focus of this article is on the bulk of the observations in the dataset, but the fact that being too extreme is also a liability lends support to the party fit hypothesis.

Figure 3.1 presents the predicted probability of running for Congress for Republican state legislators across a range of ideology scores.³⁶ The graph also shows the predicted probabilities for state legislators who have the same ideology scores as various former and current members of Congress, including moderates like Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and Steven LaTourette (R-OH) and conservatives like Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Speaker John Boehner (R-OH). The probability that any state legislator runs for Congress is low, but the difference across Republicans is striking. For state legislators who resemble conservatives like Paul Ryan and John Boehner, the probability of running for Congress is 1.9% and 1.1%, respectively, but this decreases to 0.3% and 0.2% for state legislators who resemble ideological moderates like Steven LaTourette and Olympia Snowe, respectively. In other words, the probability that a conservative state legislator like Paul Ryan runs for Congress is more than nine times greater than that of a moderate state legislator like Olympia Snowe.

³⁶ All other variables are set at their mean or mode.

Figure 3.1: Predicted Probability of Running for Congress for Republican State Legislators, By State Legislator Ideology (2000-2010)

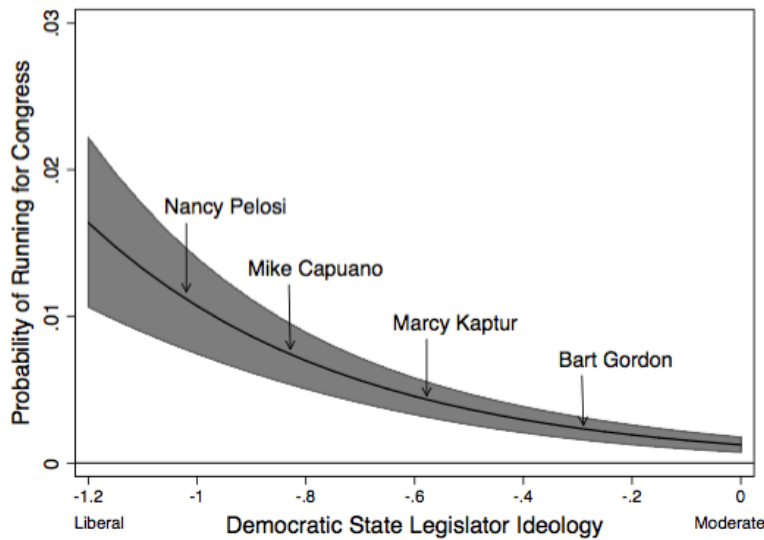


Note: The arrows refer to hypothetical state legislators that have the same ideological scores as various former and current members of Congress. For example, the arrow corresponding to Paul Ryan represents the probability of running for Congress for a state legislator who has the same ideology score as Ryan.

For Democratic state legislators, the situation looks slightly different. Conservative Democrats are also less likely to run for Congress than those with more liberal preferences, but there are important differences between Republicans and Democrats in terms of the size of the effect. Figure 3.2 illustrates the predicted probability of running for Congress for Democratic state legislators across a range of ideology scores. We can also use the scores of former and current Democratic members of Congress to calculate the probability of running for Congress for state legislators who resemble moderates like Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Bart Gordon (D-TN) or liberals like Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Mike Capuano (D-MA). In comparison to Republicans, the disparity across Democrats is small: the probability that liberal state legislators like Nancy Pelosi and Mike Capuano run for Congress is 1.1% and 0.7%, respectively, versus 0.4% and 0.2% for a moderate state legislator who resembles Marcy Kaptur and Bart Gordon, respectively.

These patterns conform to Carmines' (2011) finding that the ideological distribution of newly elected Democrats is wider than that of newly elected Republicans.

Figure 3.2: Predicted Probability of Running for Congress for Democratic State Legislators, By State Legislator Ideology (2000-2010)

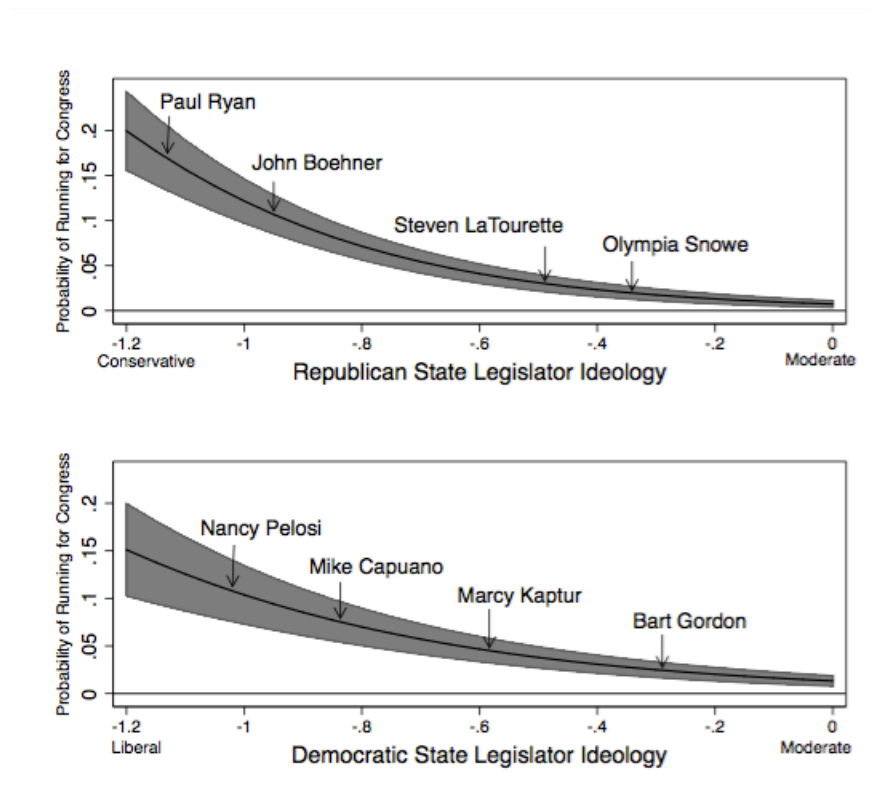


Note: The arrows refer to hypothetical state legislators that have the same ideological scores as various former and current members of Congress. For example, the arrow corresponding to Nancy Pelosi represents the probability of running for Congress for a state legislator who has the same ideology score as Pelosi.

The impact of seat type is also worth discussing in greater detail. As expected, the probability of seeking congressional office is lower for Republican and Democratic state legislators in districts with incumbents running for re-election. There is a sizeable incumbency advantage in American politics, and the most strategic candidates are instead likely to wait for the seat to become open (e.g., Jacobson 2004). The graphs above show the predicted probability of running for Congress when there is an incumbent running in the congressional district, as the control variables are set at their mean or mode. But we can also see whether and how the size of the effect changes when there is not an incumbent seeking re-election, as we might expect state legislators to be particularly strategic given the opportunity costs of running for higher office.

Figure 3.3 shows state legislators' predicted probability of running for Congress when there is not an incumbent running for re-election. For Republican state legislators, the probability of running for Congress for state legislators who resemble conservatives like Paul Ryan and John Boehner, the probability of running for Congress is 17% and 11%, respectively, when the congressional seat is open, but this decreases to 3% and 2% for state legislators who resemble ideological moderates like Steven LaTourette and Olympia Snowe, respectively. For Democratic state legislators, the probability that liberal state legislators like Nancy Pelosi and Mike Capuano run for Congress is 11% and 7%, respectively, when there is not an incumbent running for re-election. This probability decreases to 4% and 2% for a moderate state legislator who resembles Marcy Kaptur and Bart Gordon, respectively.

Figure 3.3: Predicted Probability of Running for Congress for Republican and Democratic State Legislators, In Open Congressional Seats (2000-2010)



Put differently, the marginal effect of the presence of an incumbent varies dramatically across individuals.³⁷ In fact, the type of congressional seat hardly matters at all for moderate Republicans and moderate Democrats. This is because they are not running for Congress regardless of whether or not there is an incumbent. For state legislators at the ideological poles, however, their probability of running for Congress decreases dramatically when there is an incumbent seeking re-election. The latter result, but not the former, corresponds with our expectations of the conditions under which quality candidates are likely to run for elective office. The findings are noteworthy, and they provide additional nuance and richness to our conceptions of the “strategic politician.”

In terms of the remainder of the control variables, Republican state legislators that are nested in conservative congressional districts are less likely to run for Congress, whereas Democrats that are nested in conservative districts are more likely to do so ($p < 0.10$). This conforms to the result above that state legislators who report a favorable district partisanship believe it would be more difficult to win the primary. Also, those who raised more money as state legislators and those with more experience as state legislative candidates are more likely to seek higher office, as well as state legislators who are term-limited. Republicans in professionalized state legislatures and state legislatures with higher levels of Democratic control are more inclined to run for Congress. Among Democrats, women are less likely to run for Congress than their male counterparts. Lastly, the coefficient on the extreme ideologue dummy variable is insignificant in both models, which may in part be due to the relative dearth of very extreme ideologues in the dataset.³⁸

³⁷ The figures with the marginal effect of the presence of an incumbent are provided in Appendix A.7.

³⁸ The results are identical if the extreme ideologue dummy variable is excluded from the models.

Taken together, the results provide evidence in support of the party fit hypothesis, which suggests that ideological moderates in the congressional pipeline are less likely to run for Congress than those at the ideological poles. Specifically, the more liberal the Republican state legislator, the less likely she is to run for Congress; the more conservative the Democratic state legislator, the less likely she is to do so. This disparity between ideologues and moderates is particularly pronounced on the Republican side, which provides an additional explanation for why Republican replacements have been increasingly conservative (Bonica 2010; Carmines 2011). In addition, and for both Republicans and Democrats, these differences are even starker in open seats, with ideologues dramatically more likely to run for Congress when there is not an incumbent seeking re-election. While scholars have yet to explore the effect of candidate ideology and party fit on the decision to run for congressional office, the results presented here show that patterns of candidate entry have important implications for the persistence of polarization and the rise in asymmetric polarization in Congress.

Summary

Scholars of American politics have pointed to two main explanations for partisan polarization in Congress: mass-level changes in the electorate and institutional-level changes in Congress. This chapter builds on the literature by offering a candidate entry explanation for how polarization has been reinforced and even exacerbated. The party fit hypothesis suggests that ideological extremism in Congress has discouraged moderates in the congressional pipeline from running for Congress. I find that in the contemporary political context, liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state legislators are less likely to launch a congressional bid than those at the ideological poles. The results help to account for the absence of a new cohort of incoming

moderate candidates, particularly on the Republican side (see Carmines 2011), and they have important implications for the persistence of polarization in Congress. Indeed, member replacement processes are the main driver behind the rise in polarization (Theriault 2006), and the abstention of ideological moderates from the candidate pool—and the selection of ideologues into the candidate pool—suggests that partisan polarization is here to stay.

Chapter 4: The Decision to Run Across Male and Female State Legislators

The 2010 elections marked the first time in thirty years when the number of women in Congress did not increase. The burden was not shared equally between the two parties, however, as the number of Democratic women in the U.S. House decreased by seven and the number of Republican women actually went up by seven (CAWP 2013). On the Republican side, the incoming class included 9 women and 75 men. An article in *Slate* described this cohort of GOP women as follows: “Most of [them] have children—or, rather, ‘the Lord blessed them’ with children and their ‘most important job is being a mom.’ They hate Obamacare, wasteful government spending, and open borders. More than anything, though, they hate Nancy Pelosi” (Rosin and Malone 2010). In 2012, the electoral tides were more favorable to Democrats. The Democratic Party witnessed gains in the number of women, and the bulk of these newly elected women instead came from the left end of the ideological spectrum.

Over the last three decades, the ideological gulf between Republican and Democratic women has become more and more glaring with each election cycle. Male and female co-partisans have become increasingly similar and Democratic and Republican women have become increasingly distinct (Frederick 2009). Candidate ideology has received little attention in the women and politics literature, but this is a surprising omission given the recent ideological shifts among women in Congress. Gender scholars have, for the most part, compared male candidates with female candidates, largely with respect to their vote totals, campaign receipts, political ambition, and media coverage. Most research designs therefore do not allow for an analysis of variation across women, particularly with regard to ideological variation.

This chapter examines how ideology influences the emergence of women candidates, and more generally, how ideological variation in the decision to run matters for the growing partisan

disparity in women's representation as well as the types of women who now hold congressional office. I extend the findings in the previous chapter and concentrate on state legislators who are well situated to run for Congress. Again, the party fit hypothesis suggests that, regardless of gender, ideological conformity with the party reputation shapes the decision to run for office. The party fit argument has implications for the partisan imbalance of women in Congress, because, first, Republican women in the congressional pipeline have historically been to the left of their male counterparts, and second, there is a dearth of conservative women in the pipeline.

Political Parties and Women's Representation

A similar partisan gap in women's representation has emerged at the state legislative level, with the number of Democratic women increasing and the number of Republican women even declining slightly. This is especially relevant given that the state legislature is a stepping-stone to congressional office. A handful of scholars have offered party-specific explanations for account for this trend. In an analysis of women's representation within the two parties across 49 state legislatures, Elder (2012) suggests that the distinct party cultures foster the representation of Democratic women and inhibit the representation of Republican women (see also Freeman 1987). The model includes both mass-level and elite-level variables, and she finds that increasing voter Republicanism and strength of the Christian Right across states leads to lower levels of female Republican state legislators. Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) also examine over-time changes in the percentage of Republican and Democratic women in state legislative parties. They argue that Republican women have been disproportionately affected by the rightward shift of the Republican Party because they are more likely to be ideological moderates (see also Thomsen 2011, 2012). In both studies, however, the specific mechanisms behind this

growing partisan disparity remain unexplored, and it is unclear how various stages of the electoral process matter for this trend. Moreover, even party-specific explanations are unable to account for—either theoretically or empirically—within-party variation across women. We know little, for example, about why some women run for office and others do not or why party leaders might recruit some women and not others.

Why Party Fit Matters for Women’s Representation

Party fit is the congruence between a candidate’s ideology and the ideological reputation of her party. The party’s ideological reputation is about “what the party stands for—and acts on—in terms of policy” (Aldrich and Freeze 2011, 186), and it gives meaning to its label and distinguishes the party from its opponent (Grynaviski 2010; Snyder and Ting 2002; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). Party reputation is similar to Elder’s (2012) use of party culture, and in the contemporary context, the party fit hypothesis makes predictions that are similar to Elder’s finding that the culture of the Republican Party inhibits women’s representation and the culture of the Democratic party encourages women’s representation. Yet, the concept of party fit differs in that it emphasizes the interaction between the candidate and the party. The added value of party fit is threefold: first, it accounts for within-party variation in levels of political ambition and party recruitment across women, and second, it offers an explanation for the changing ideological profile among women in Congress; and third, it allows for a dynamic understanding of female representation that varies over time and across contexts.

Moreover, because party fit operates at the individual-level, it facilitates an analysis of the various micro-processes that are driving the growing partisan disparity. We can first use the party fit framework to uncover individual-level differences across women in the decision to run

for and remain in political office, and we can then examine how the ideological distribution of women as a group matters for broader changes in women's representation, and more specifically, the partisan imbalance among women in Congress. By looking at women as individuals and as a group, this helps us to avoid making any "essentialist" claims about women but also to shed additional light on why women as a group are grossly underrepresented in the nation's highest legislative body.

The theoretical expectations outlined in Chapter 2 are not gender-specific, meaning that the party fit hypothesis works in similar ways for men and women. However, the implications of the theory are gendered. This chapter explores ideological and gender differences in the pool of potential male and female candidates. There are two main reasons why recent partisan shifts are expected to have a disproportionate effect on the representation of Republican women. First, Republican women in the congressional pipeline have historically been to the left of their male co-partisans (e.g., Carroll 2003; Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013; Epstein, Niemi, and Powell 2005; Poggione 2004; but see Hogan 2008).³⁹ A recent study of state legislators conducted by scholars at the Center for American Women in Politics shows that Republican women in state legislative office are nearly twice as likely as Republican men to identify as liberal, slightly liberal, or middle of the road (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). On top of this, voters perceive women candidates to be more liberal than they actually are (Koch 2002).

³⁹ Carroll (2003) suggests this is changing, with women becoming increasingly conservative. In a comprehensive analysis of state legislators, Osborn (2012) shows that partisanship matters much more than gender for understanding how legislators address women's issues. This pattern could be explained as an eventual consequence of party fit.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, there is a dearth of conservative Republican women in the pipeline.⁴⁰ To be sure, the number of Republican women holding state legislative office is small, regardless of ideology. In the Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006), the national survey of state legislators used in the previous chapter, there are only 59 Republican women state legislators in the dataset, compared to 330 Republican men. Even so, the pool of conservative Republican women in the pipeline pales in comparison to that of Republican men. Of the 270 Republican state legislators in the CES who identify as conservative or very conservative, 234 are men and a mere 36 are women. In other words, women comprise 13% of the pool of ideologically suitable potential candidates, which is a close match with actual figures of female representation in the Republican Party (8%).

It should be noted that there are similar gendered ideological disparities in both parties, with Republican as well as Democratic women state legislators to the left of their male co-partisans. Because of this, however, the rise in partisan polarization is expected to differentially affect Republican and Democratic women. A shift to the left by the Democratic Party might even benefit Democratic women (see also Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). My concern here is mostly on the plateau in the representation of Republican women. Scholars have long predicted women's representation to increase over time, so the growth on the Democratic side is less puzzling, but it is possible that polarization has spurred this "true" rate of growth that we would expect absent the rise in polarization.

In sum, gender scholars have largely focused on comparisons between male and female candidates, but as Schreiber (2012, 550) notes, "We know little about the differences among women who seek elective positions of power." The party fit framework offers an ideological

⁴⁰ My interest is in the available candidate pool, so why there are so few conservative Republican women state legislators is not of critical importance. However, the conservative shift among GOP female state legislators is consistent with the argument here (Carroll 2003; Osborn 2012).

rationale for how the GOP's reputation might operate differently across Republican women, attracting conservative women and deterring moderate women from running for office. It does not preclude the possibility that the Republican Party can actively recruit (conservative) women candidates, and if the GOP decides it is worthwhile to run more women, there are plenty of conservative women in the public it could recruit. The argument here is quite different, though. The theory suggests that the probability that a "Republican type" will be elected to Congress and be a woman is low, because there is a dearth of conservative Republican women in state legislative and congressional office who are well positioned to run. Simply put, there are many more Republican men who satisfy this condition, which makes them much more likely to seek, and therefore hold, a congressional seat.

Data and Method

I again utilize data from the Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone et al. 2004), a national survey of state legislators. Most importantly, there is no statistically significant gender difference in the percentage of members of Congress with state legislative experience—50% of men and 55% of women have state legislative backgrounds (Carnes 2012). There are a total of 538 state legislators, 258 Republicans and 280 Democrats, in the sample used here.⁴¹ Again, the party fit hypothesis suggests that, regardless of gender, ideological moderates in the pipeline are less likely to be attracted to a congressional career than those at the poles. The magnitude of the effect may differ by party due to variation in the ideological heterogeneity of the two parties.

⁴¹ The data are drawn from the 1998 wave of the Candidate Emergence Study. The specific states are not identified in the publicly available data. The survey was mailed to 2,714 state legislators, and 874 of them responded, for a response rate of 32.2% (see Maestas et al. 2006, 199). I am not able to use the 2000 wave of the state legislator data, as ideology was not included in the survey. Maestas et al. (2006) also use only the 1998 wave in their study of state legislators.

I use a logistic regression to estimate the effect of state legislator ideology on perceived attraction to a career in the U.S. House. There are two reasons why attraction to a career in the U.S. House is the dependent variable in this chapter, rather than perceived chance of winning the primary or relative value of a House seat as in the previous chapter.⁴² First, in their study of state legislators, Maestas et al. (2006) refer to state legislators' attraction to a career in the House as a measure of their "political ambition."⁴³ Political ambition has assumed a prominent place in the gender and politics literature (e.g., Lawless and Fox 2005, 2010), and the CES data can shed light on how ideology also matters for political ambition.⁴⁴ Second, in light of the prevailing consensus in the gender literature that "when women run, women win," I do not focus on the electoral environment. Though, I should note that there is no significant gender difference in the perceived chance of winning the primary or the general election within moderate and non-moderate state legislators in either party.

The dependent variable is coded as one if they rate their attraction to a U.S. House seat as "somewhat high," "high," or "extremely high," and zero otherwise.⁴⁵ Approximately half of the sample is politically ambitious, and there is no significant partisan difference in whether

⁴² However, in the previous chapter, gender is not a significant predictor in either the Republican or Democratic models of state legislators' perceived chance of winning the primary or relative value of a House seat.

⁴³ This is more accurately a measure of "progressive ambition," or state legislators' attraction to higher office (Schlesinger 1966).

⁴⁴ The wording of the questions differ in the CES data and the Citizen Political Ambition Study (CPAS) because the former is a sample of state legislators and the latter is a sample of citizens in the pipeline professions. The CES study measures political ambition with the following question: "In general, how would you rate the attraction to you personally for a political career in the U.S. House?" The CPAS measures ambition with the following question: "Have you ever thought about running for office?" (Lawless and Fox 2005, 44).

⁴⁵ Unlike Maestas et al. (2006), the neutral response is not coded as "attracted" here, but the results remain the same if it is. I follow the coding procedures in Maestas et al. (2006) unless noted otherwise. See Appendix B.1 for summary statistics.

respondents are attracted to a congressional career. The primary independent variable is the ideology of the state legislator. Moderate Republicans are those who do not identify as conservative or very conservative, and moderate Democrats are those who do not identify as liberal or very liberal.⁴⁶ Although I do not posit an additional decrease in political ambition among moderate women, past research shows that women are perceived to be more liberal than they actually are, which might depress the desire to run for office for moderate Republican women in particular. To check for this, I also interact state legislator ideology with gender to examine the joint effect of gender and ideology on attraction to a congressional career.

I control for all of the variables in the Maestas et al. (2006) study of the determinants of attraction to a U.S. House seat. The control variables measure the “opportunity structure,” which has long been shown to influence the decision to run for office (e.g., Black 1972; Rohde 1979; Schlesinger 1966). The opportunity structure is shaped by three factors: the probability of winning, the benefits associated with the office, and the costs of running. First, state legislators rated their chances of winning the nomination and the general election, and these responses were multiplied to capture their estimated chance of winning. State legislators who perceive a favorable district partisanship and those who have been contacted by the party are also expected to report higher levels of attraction to a House seat.⁴⁷ Second, the benefits of the office were measured by their evaluations of the prestige and effectiveness of a career in the U.S. House and

⁴⁶ I also examined state legislator ideology in terms of their policy preferences (see Appendix B.3). This allowed me to explore whether those who are moderate on women’s issues (education funding and abortion rights) are less likely to be attracted to a House seat. The results are robust to a variety of combinations of policy positions, but I decided that ideology offers a better test of the argument.

⁴⁷ While it might seem as if the variables that capture the perceived probability of winning would be linked, the correlations among ideology, chance of winning, district partisanship, and party recruitment are all below 0.2. This suggests that the variables are measuring distinct concepts and can be included in the same model. It should be emphasized that the model in Table 4.1 is a replication of that in the Maestas et al. (2006) article, but with the inclusion of state legislator ideology.

the legislature in which they currently serve. These two evaluations were combined, and the difference between them is a measure of the relative value of a House seat. Third, those who have served more terms in state legislative office and those in professionalized state legislatures may perceive the costs of running to be higher, whereas the costs may be lower for state legislators who face term limits. In addition, as family costs and campaign costs increase, political ambition is expected to decrease. Lastly, the model includes controls for gender, age, risk orientation, and personal motivations for entering politics.

Results

The results with the CES data are presented in Table 4.1. This section focuses on the main variable of interest, state legislator ideology, and then briefly reports the results on the control variables. The key result in the Republican model is that ideologically moderate Republican state legislators are significantly less likely to be attracted to a career in the U.S. House than those who identify as ideologically conservative.⁴⁸ The coefficient for moderate Democrats is also negative, but it does not reach conventional levels of significance.⁴⁹ However, the lack of significance among Democrats makes sense given the timing of the survey. This wave of the CES survey was conducted in 1998, and there were important ideological differences between the parties at that point. In the 105th Congress (1997-98), the median House

⁴⁸ For Republicans, the relationship between state legislator ideology and attraction to a House seat is stronger when the control variables are omitted from the model ($p < 0.01$); for Democrats, the relationship remains insignificant when the controls are omitted. Also, the results with the respondent's policy preferences are similar to those in Table 4.1. Republican state legislators with policy preferences that do not conform to the party platform report lower levels of attraction to a House seat (see Appendix B.3).

⁴⁹ I am not able to test whether moderates self-select out of running or are gate-kept out by party leaders, but I expect both mechanisms to be at work. A smaller percentage of moderate Republicans report being contacted by the party (1.3% of moderates vs. 4.4% of conservatives), which conforms to the argument here. (Equal percentages of moderate and liberal Democrats—3.9%—report being contacted.) I used attraction to a House career as the dependent variable because that is ultimately what I seek to explain.

Republican had a CFscore of 0.80 and the median Democrat had a score of -0.65, compared to 0.94 and -0.79 for the median Republican and Democrat, respectively, in the 112th Congress (2011-12). Also, the standard deviation of the GOP in the 105th Congress was 0.27, whereas the Democratic Party had a standard deviation of 0.33. Non-liberal Democrats were thus a better fit for the party in the late 1990s, and furthermore, the party might not have seemed as distant because of the relative heterogeneity of the party caucus.

Table 4.1: The Determinants of State Legislators' Attraction to a Career in the U.S. House, By Party

| | Republican State Legislators | Democratic State Legislators |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Self-Reported Ideology (Non-Conservative Republicans; Non-Liberal Democrats) | -0.74* (0.37) | -0.57 (0.36) |
| Future Chances of Winning | 2.79** (0.67) | 1.86** (0.59) |
| Favorable District Partisanship | -0.51 (0.35) | 0.56 (0.31) |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.59* (0.31) | 0.47* (0.23) |
| Relative Value of House Seat | 0.03 (0.06) | 0.08 (0.05) |
| Terms in Office | 0.08 (0.16) | 0.16 (0.15) |
| Serves in Professional Legislature | -0.01 (0.12) | -0.22 (0.12) |
| Faces Term Limits | -0.17 (0.35) | 0.52 (0.33) |
| Campaign Cost Index | -0.08 (0.24) | -0.38 (0.20) |
| Family Cost Index | -0.64** (0.24) | -0.52* (0.21) |
| Woman | -0.18 (0.48) | -0.44 (0.36) |
| Age | -0.69** (0.15) | -0.68** (0.15) |
| Risk Acceptant | -0.39 (0.47) | 0.14 (0.45) |
| Personal Motivations | 0.11 (0.14) | 0.42** (0.15) |
| Constant | 3.24** (1.23) | 2.76* (1.18) |
| Number of Observations | 258 | 280 |
| Log-Likelihood | -123.76 | -141.34 |

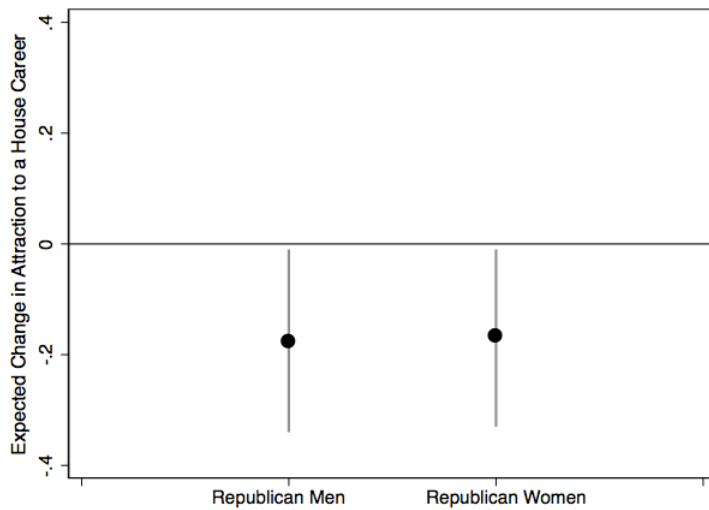
Source: Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone et al. 2004).

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is 1 if the legislator is attracted to a career in the U.S. House and 0 if not. **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

To better understand the gender dynamics, I estimated how attraction to the House varies by ideology and gender using the results from Table 4.1.⁵⁰ Figure 4.1a shows the expected difference in attraction to a House seat among male and female Republican state legislators when their ideology is changed from conservative to moderate. The predicted values are virtually identical for men and women in the congressional pipeline (-0.18 and -0.17, respectively), and the change is statistically different from zero for both groups ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, Figure 4.1b reports the expected difference in attraction to a House seat among moderate and conservative state legislators when the gender variable is changed from male to female. The results conform to the argument here. The predicted values are nearly equal for moderate and conservative state legislators (-0.03 and -0.04, respectively), and the effect of changing the respondent's gender from male to female on her attraction to a House career is not statistically different from zero in either the moderate or conservative group of state legislators.

⁵⁰ All values were calculated with CLARIFY (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003) using 1,000 simulations, with control variables set to their mean or mode.

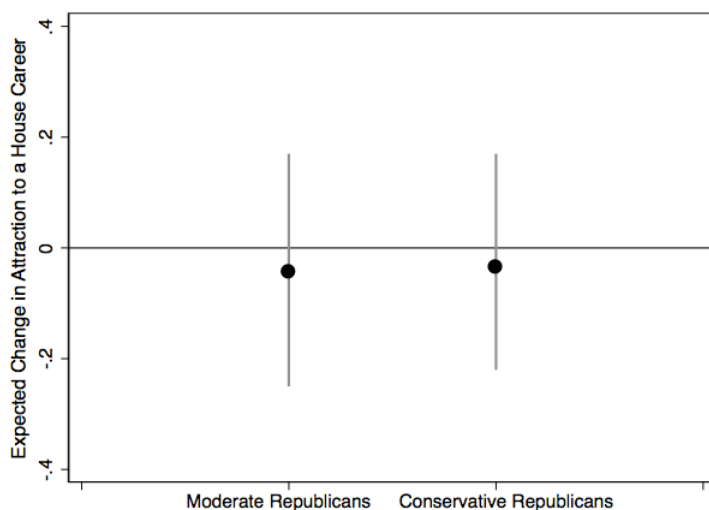
Figure 4.1a: The Effect of Being Ideologically Moderate on Attraction to a Career in the U.S. House, Among Male and Female Republican State Legislators



Source: Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone et al. 2004).

Note: The figure shows the expected change in attraction to a career in the U.S. House when shifting from conservative to moderate for male and female Republicans (with 95% confidence intervals).

Figure 4.1b: The Effect of Being a Woman on Attraction to a Career in the U.S. House, Among Moderate and Conservative Republican State Legislators



Source: Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone et al. 2004).

Note: The figure shows the expected change in attraction to a career in the U.S. House when shifting from male to female for moderate and conservative Republicans (with 95% confidence intervals).

Also, it does not appear that candidate gender has an additional effect on attraction to a House seat that is independent of ideology.⁵¹ Moderate Republican women are no less likely than moderate Republican men to be attracted to a congressional career. Instead, among those in the CES dataset, ideological differences greatly outweigh gender differences as predictors of attraction to a House seat. Because of the relatively small sample size, we should not dismiss the possibility of gender and ideology interaction effects, but the findings are instructive of how gender might matter in less obvious and unexpected ways (see Mettler 2005 for a compelling example of this). Again, the reason that party fit has implications for Republican women is twofold: first, Republican women are more likely to be moderates, and second, there is a dearth of conservative women in the pipeline.

The control variables reflect the results in the Maestas et al. (2006) article, though they vary slightly because the sample is split along party lines.⁵² For Republican state legislators, the perceived probability of winning, contact from the party, estimated family costs, and age influence levels of attraction to a House seat. We see similar results on the Democratic side. For Democrats, the perceived chance of winning, contact from the party, estimated family costs, age, and personal motivations shape attraction to a House seat. In sum, traditional factors such as party recruitment and the ability to garner support matter in clear ways for candidate emergence. However, scholars have overlooked how ideological congruence—or lack thereof—with the party’s ideological reputation may also influence attraction to a congressional career. The

⁵¹ Given that the interaction term is not significant, I exclude it from the models (the results are provided in Appendix B.2). Also, being a moderate on women’s issues does not seem to influence attraction to a House seat. Like the general policy moderate variable, the coefficient is negative, which is not surprising given that ideology is increasingly coherent across a range of policies, but it does not reach conventional levels of significance (see Appendix B.3 for the general policy issues and the women’s issues models).

⁵² The full model in Appendix B.2 conforms to their results, so I am confident that our findings would be the same had the authors divided their analysis along party lines.

findings suggest that liberal Republicans in the pipeline are less likely to be attracted to a U.S. House seat than conservatives in the pipeline. Conservative and liberal Democrats in the pipeline are indistinguishable in terms of their attraction to a House seat, but this makes sense given the ideological makeup of the Democratic Party at the time of the survey.

The Implications of Party Fit for Candidate Emergence

The CES data help to shed light on the perceptions of state legislators, but it would also be useful to analyze the ideological profile of state legislators who decide to run for Congress, as we are ultimately interested in how patterns of candidate self-selection contribute to the growing partisan gap. In addition, because this disparity has increased gradually and over multiple election cycles, it would be ideal to test the party fit hypothesis with more recent data and data that span a longer time period. A new dataset created by Bonica (2013b) allows us to do both. Bonica (2013b) uses campaign finance records from state and federal elections to estimate the ideology of a wide range of political actors, including members of Congress, state legislators, interest groups, and individual donors. Most importantly here, the dataset includes ideal points for state legislators who did and did not run for Congress from 2000 to 2010.⁵³ This enables a

⁵³ The goal was to restrict the sample to “quality congressional candidates” who do and do not run for Congress (Jacobson and Kernell 1983). Thus, the sample includes state legislative incumbents who make their first run for Congress and state legislative incumbents who run for the state legislature again but could have run for Congress. The sample excludes first-time state legislative candidates who are not yet quality candidates, those who have previously run for the state legislature and lost, as well as state legislators who seek higher state legislative office. The sample also excludes state legislative incumbents who have previously run for Congress, as the aim is to compare the decision to run for Congress across similarly situated state legislators.

test of party fit specifically in the polarized context, as partisan polarization had become a defining characteristic of Congress during these years.⁵⁴

I use a logistic regression to estimate the relationship between state legislator ideology and her decision to run for Congress. The Republican model includes 14,459 observations and the Democratic model includes 16,571 observations.⁵⁵ The dependent variable is coded 1 if the state legislator runs for Congress in a given year and 0 if she runs for the state legislature again. The primary independent variable is the ideology of the state legislator, coded so that higher values correspond to Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism. I include a variable for candidate gender to examine the role of both gender and ideology. The party fit hypothesis suggests that, regardless of gender, Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism have a negative effect on candidate emergence: the more liberal (conservative) the Republican (Democratic) state legislator, the less likely she is to run for Congress.

The model includes controls for a variety of electoral, institutional, and partisan factors. Palmer and Simon (2008) and Elder (2008) have previously shown that district and regional characteristics shape partisan patterns of female representation, and I control for the ideology of the congressional district that the state legislator either ran in or would have run in (Tausanovitch

⁵⁴Bonica's state legislator estimates are available from 1990 to 2010, but I restrict the sample from 2000 to 2010. The number of state legislative candidates who filed with the FEC was significantly lower prior to 2000, so the number of state legislators in the dataset who could have run for office was unreasonably low. Specifically, there are 8,027 observations in the dataset between 1990 and 1998, compared to 31,030 between 2000 and 2010. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, there are 7,300 state legislators nationwide in a given election cycle, so the latter figure is a much closer approximation of the eligible pool of state legislators (NCSL 2013).

⁵⁵ The state legislators represent 49 states; Nebraska is excluded because its legislature is non-partisan. Of the pool of Republican state legislators who were well situated for Congress in a given election year from 2000 to 2010, 290 (2.0%) ran for Congress and 14,169 did not. In the pool of Democratic state legislators, 208 (1.3%) ran for Congress and 16,363 did not. I also ran a rare event logistic regression, and the results are identical. In addition, I ran the model with state fixed effects, and the results remain the same. State fixed effects are not included here because doing so leads to a sizeable decrease in the number of observations, but year fixed effects are included.

and Warshaw 2013) and I include a dummy variable for southern states. I also account for whether there was an incumbent running for re-election in the congressional district and whether the district is majority-minority (Elder 2008).⁵⁶ I calculated the average amount of money individuals raised as state legislators from Bonica's data, as this likely corresponds to their ability to fund a congressional campaign, and I control for the number of times individuals sought state legislative office to capture their experience as candidates. Lastly, state legislative professionalization is measured with the Squire (2007) index, and I include measures of partisan control of the state legislature (Klarner 2013) and whether the state legislature has term limits.

The results are presented in Table 4.2. Of most importance is the negative coefficient on the party fit variable. As expected, Republican liberalism and Democratic conservatism has a negative effect on candidate emergence: the more liberal the Republican state legislator, the less likely she is to run for Congress; the more conservative the Democratic state legislator, the less likely she is to do so.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ I used Census data to assign state legislative districts (SLD) to their corresponding congressional district (CD). For SLDs that fall into more than one CD, I used the CD in which their SLD comprised a larger portion of the CD population. The ideology variable is correlated with Palmer and Simon's (2008) women-friendly variable at 0.8. The incumbency data were generously provided by Gary Jacobson.

⁵⁷ The size of the effect of ideology in this chapter is different from that in the previous chapter, particularly for Democratic state legislators. This is because of the inclusion of slightly different control variables, namely South and majority-minority districts, which have been shown to matter in the gender and politics literature. Nevertheless, the trends are the same in both chapters.

Table 4.2: The Determinants of Running for Congress, By Party (2000-2010)

| | Republican State Legislators | Democratic State Legislators |
|--|---|---|
| State Legislator Ideology (Republican Liberalism; Democratic Conservatism) | -2.93** (0.27) | -2.86** (0.21) |
| Woman | -0.14 (0.17) | -0.47** (0.16) |
| Incumbent Running in Congressional District | -2.36** (0.13) | -2.45** (0.17) |
| Ideology of Congressional District (Higher=Conservative) | -1.95** (0.33) | 0.87** (0.33) |
| South | 0.22 (0.18) | 1.83** (0.24) |
| Majority-Minority Congressional District | -0.16 (0.33) | 0.42* (0.21) |
| Log of Mean Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 0.44** (0.07) | 0.47** (0.07) |
| Number of Times Run for State Legislature | 0.35** (0.04) | 0.38** (0.05) |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 2.05** (0.67) | 1.84** (0.73) |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.75** (0.17) | -0.27 (0.21) |
| In State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.81** (0.15) | 0.88** (0.17) |
| Constant | -11.50** (0.85) | -12.20** (0.86) |
| Number of Observations | 14,459 | 16,571 |
| Log-Likelihood | -1118.23 | -842.52 |

Source: State legislator estimates from Bonica (2013). Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by individual in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the incumbent state legislator ran for Congress and 0 if the incumbent legislator instead ran for the state legislature. The model includes year fixed effects. **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

To further explore within-party gender differences, Figure 4.2 presents the predicted probability of running for Congress for male and female Republican state legislators across a range of ideology scores.⁵⁸ The patterns are remarkably similar for both men and women in the congressional pipeline, and the confidence intervals overlap across all values of male and female

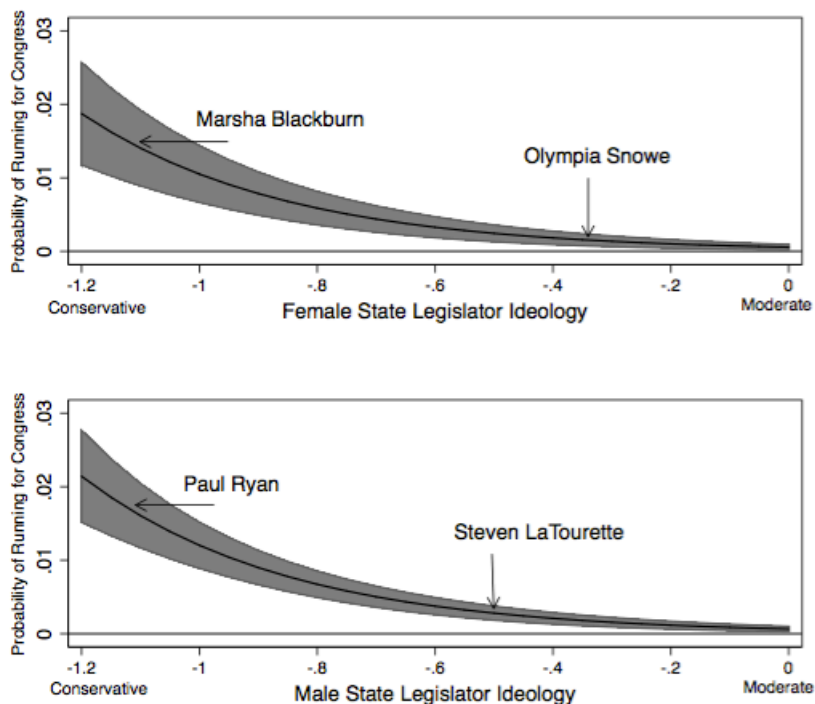
⁵⁸ All other variables are set at their mean or mode.

state legislator ideology.⁵⁹ Figure 4.2 also shows the probabilities of running for Congress for state legislators who have the same ideology scores as former and current members of Congress, including moderates like Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and Steven LaTourette (R-OH) and conservatives like Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Paul Ryan (R-WI). The difference between moderate and conservative Republicans is striking. The probability that a moderate female state legislator resembling Olympia Snowe runs for Congress is 0.2%, compared to 1.4% for a conservative woman resembling Marsha Blackburn. In other words, the probability that a state legislator like Blackburn runs for Congress is seven times greater than that of a state legislator like Olympia Snowe. Similarly, the probability that a conservative male state legislator like Paul Ryan runs for Congress is 1.8%, versus 0.3% for a moderate like Steven LaTourette.⁶⁰ Again, the primary divide is along ideological rather than gender lines.

⁵⁹ In light of Elder's (2008) findings, I also ran the models by region to ensure that the South and the Northeast are not driving the results. The results on the ideology variable remain the same across models (see Appendix B.4).

⁶⁰ For a hypothetical man with Blackburn's (Snowe's) ideology score, the probability of running for Congress is 1.6% (0.2%). For a hypothetical woman with Ryan's (LaTourette's) ideology score, the probability of running for Congress is 1.5% (0.2%). However, the confidence intervals overlap for men and women across all values of ideology.

Figure 4.2: Predicted Probability of Running for Congress for Republican State Legislators, Across Male and Female State Legislators (2000-2010)



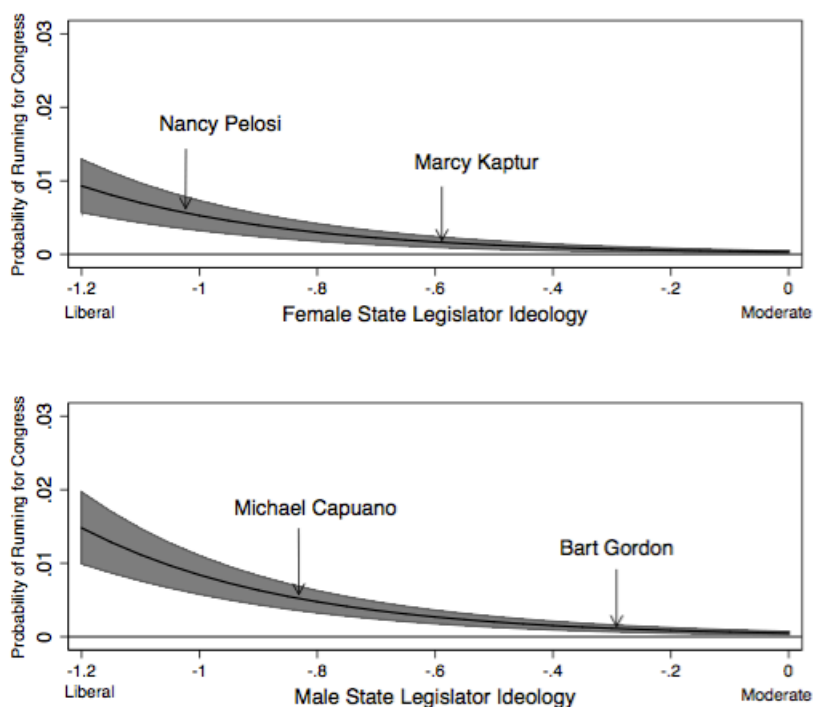
Source: State legislator estimates from Bonica (2013).

Note: The arrows refer to hypothetical state legislators that have the same ideological scores as various former and current members of Congress. For example, the arrow corresponding to Olympia Snowe represents the probability of running for Congress for a state legislator who has the same ideology score as Snowe.

For Democratic state legislators, the situation looks slightly different. The coefficient on the ideology variable is also statistically significant, but there are important differences between Republicans and Democrats in terms of the size of the effect. Figure 4.3 illustrates the predicted probability of running for Congress for Democratic male and female state legislators across a range of ideology scores. We can again use the ideology scores of Democratic members of Congress to calculate the predicted probability of running for Congress for state legislators who resemble moderates like Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Bart Gordon (D-TN) or liberals like Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Michael Capuano (D-MA). In comparison to Republicans, the disparity

across Democrats is small. The probability that a liberal female state legislator who resembles Pelosi runs for Congress is 0.6%, compared to 0.2% for a moderate female state legislator who resembles Kaptur. For a liberal male legislator like Capuano and a moderate like Gordon, the probability of seeking congressional office is 0.5% and 0.1%, respectively.

Figure 4.3: Predicted Probability of Running for Congress for Democratic State Legislators, Across Male and Female State Legislators (2000-2010)



Source: State legislator estimates from Bonica (2013).

Note: The arrows refer to hypothetical state legislators that have the same ideological scores as various former and current members of Congress. For example, the arrow corresponding to Marcy Kaptur represents the probability of running for Congress for a state legislator who has the same ideology score as Kaptur.

In terms of the controls, the probability of running is lower for Republican and Democratic state legislators in districts with incumbents running for re-election. Republican state legislators that are nested in conservative congressional districts are less likely to run for

Congress, whereas Democrats that are nested in conservative districts are more likely to do so, perhaps because it would be easier to win their party primary. South is positive and significant for Democratic state legislators, and Democrats are more likely to run if their congressional district is majority minority, which conforms to Elder's (2008) findings. In addition, those who raised more money as state legislators and those with more experience as state legislative candidates are more likely to seek higher office, as well as those serving in professionalized state legislatures and in legislatures with term limits. Republicans in state legislatures with higher levels of Democratic control are more likely to run for office. Finally, Democratic women are less likely to run than Democratic men, highlighting the fact that aggregate levels of female representation can still increase despite a negative gender coefficient.

Taken together, the results suggest that scholars must consider how ideology and gender interact to shape candidate emergence. In addition to the fact that moderate Republicans are increasingly less likely to run for Congress, GOP women are overrepresented at the moderate end of the ideological spectrum and there are also comparatively few conservative women in the congressional pipeline. Among the 7,200 Republican state legislators in the Bonica dataset who are in the conservative half of the Republican pool, only about 1,100 of them are women. In this group of conservative Republicans, 27 women and 164 men actually ran for Congress, or 2.3% and 2.7% of the pool, respectively (these differences are not significant). By comparison, although Democratic female state legislators are less likely to run for Congress than their male counterparts, their level of representation has increased dramatically. Unlike GOP women, Democratic women comprise nearly 30% of the combined moderate and liberal pools of candidates, which conforms to their actual level of representation in the party. But the good news is that if either the spectrum of ideologically suitable Republican candidates were to widen

or if the number of conservative Republican women in state legislatures were to increase, the partisan imbalance of women in Congress would be expected to diminish.

Summary

Scholars of gender and politics have pointed to three main explanations for partisan polarization in Congress: mass-level changes in the electorate and institutional-level changes in Congress. This chapter builds on the literature by offering a candidate entry explanation for how polarization has been reinforced and even exacerbated. The party fit hypothesis suggests that ideological extremism in Congress has discouraged moderates in the congressional pipeline from running for Congress. I find that in the contemporary political context, liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state legislators are less likely to launch a congressional bid than those at the ideological poles. The results help to account for the absence of a new cohort of incoming moderate candidates, particularly on the Republican side (see Carmines 2011), and they have important implications for the persistence of polarization in Congress. Indeed, member replacement processes are the main driver behind the rise in polarization (Theriault 2006), and the abstention of ideological moderates from the candidate pool—and the selection of ideologues into the candidate pool—suggests that partisan polarization is here to stay.

This chapter builds on the women and politics literature by examining ideological variation across women in the decision to run for office. The party fit framework offers an explanation for why some women candidates select into electoral contests and others do not and why party leaders might recruit some women candidates and gate-keep others. The findings presented here suggest that potential candidates, male and female alike, who do not “fit” with the party’s reputation are less likely to be attracted to a political career and ultimately less likely to

run for office. Conversely, those with ideological preferences that conform to the party's reputation are more likely to run for congressional office. In addition, the party fit framework accounts for the recent influx of conservative Republican women in Congress and helps to explain why Republican male and female MCs have become more ideologically similar over time (Frederick 2009). This is exactly what we would expect if moderate Republican women as well as moderate Republican men have increasingly abstained from electoral politics. Yet, if the party fit argument is right, the growing number of conservative women in the congressional pipeline bodes well for the representation of Republican women in Congress. As Republican women in state legislative office become a better fit for the congressional party delegation, the partisan disparity among women in Congress should fade and patterns of women's representation in both parties should follow similar trajectories.

Chapter 5: The Complete Makeover of Republican Congresswomen

At the close of the 112th Congress, the Republicans came under fire after Speaker Boehner's announcement of committee leadership positions. Of the 21 House committee chairmanships, just one would be held by a woman. Candice Miller of Michigan was selected to chair the lower-tier House Administration committee, yet even that assignment came days after the first 19 positions had all been doled out to men. Before Miller's appointment, Politico and The Hill ran stories on the gender skew among the committee chairs, and prominent Democratic Senator Patty Murray also weighed in, tweeting, "Disappointed to see House committee chairmanships in the 113th Congress will not include a single woman." Florida Republican Ileana Ros-Lehtinen presided over the Foreign Services Committee in the previous legislative session but then resigned due to term limits.

In many ways, however, the gender imbalance in committee chair assignments has little to do with gender. Even the Huffington Post acknowledged that committee chairs are typically chosen by seniority and that most committees do not have Republican women at senior levels. In fact, of the 19 Republican women currently serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, only two of them—Ros-Lehtinen and Kay Granger (TX)—have been in Congress since before 2000 (and Ros-Lehtinen had just come off a chair position). Their average year of election to the U.S. House is 2006 (CAWP 2013), which hardly makes them obvious candidates for committee leadership positions.

The retention rates of Republican women differ dramatically from those on the Democratic side. There are now 59 Democratic women in the House of Representatives, and 21 of them have served in Congress since before 2000. While more than 35% of the female Democrats currently in Congress have accrued over a decade of congressional experience, the

same could be said for a mere 11% of female Republicans. This comparative longevity in congressional service has allowed Democratic women to rise to increasingly powerful positions. Nancy Pelosi reached new heights as the former Speaker of the House and current minority leader, and when the Democrats held the majority in the 110th (2007-09) and 111th Congress (2009-11), there were four and three House committees, respectively, that were chaired by women. Together these Democratic women had 105 years of experience in Congress.

This chapter explores how differential retention rates of Republican and Democratic women in Congress matter for the growing partisan gap in women's representation. While scholars of gender and politics have focused primarily on the candidate emergence stage to explain the underrepresentation of women in elective office, I analyze how patterns of member retention matter for the partisan representation of women in office. I use quantitative data on member retirement and length of congressional service to examine ideological and gendered variation in legislator retention (Evans and Swain 2012), and I suggest that the widespread replacement of ideological moderates offers an additional explanation for the partisan disparity of women in Congress and recent ideological shifts among Republican women in Congress.

Partisan Differences in Congressional Service

On average, men in both parties serve in Congress for longer periods than their female counterparts (Lawless and Theriault 2005). From the 97th to 111th Congress (1981-2010), Republican men served an average of 5.8 terms while Republican women served an average of 4.8 terms.⁶¹ The disparity in tenure between Democratic men and women is wider, with men and women serving an average of 7.0 and 4.9 terms, respectively. However, there are important

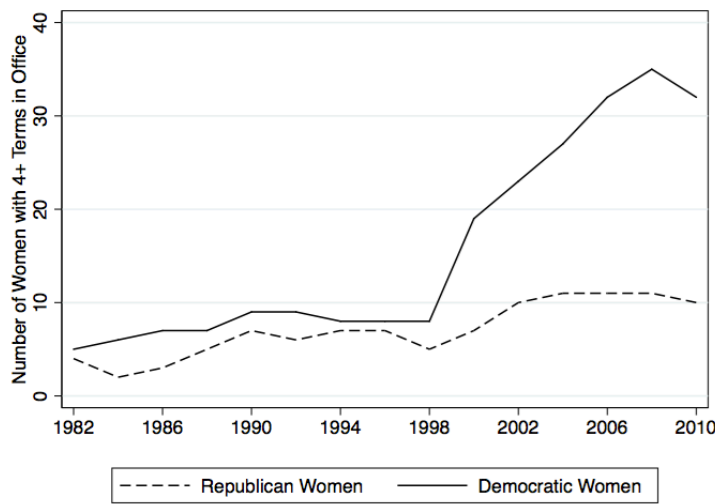
⁶¹ I am incredibly grateful to Sean Evans and John Swain for sharing their data on congressional service and retirement.

differences between Republican and Democratic women as well. Republican women have, at least in recent years, served fewer terms in Congress than their Democratic female counterparts, but what is especially noteworthy is how these patterns have changed over time. Between the 97th and 102nd Congresses (1981-92), just prior to the 1992 “Year of the Woman” elections, Republican and Democratic women had spent the same amount of time—an average of 4.5 terms—in Congress. Since then, the average length of service for Democratic women has grown markedly, from 4.5 terms to 5.2 terms, while the growth rate has been much slower for Republican women, increasing from 4.5 to 4.8 terms.

The disparity in the sheer number of Republican and Democratic women with extensive congressional experience is even more striking. Figure 5.1 shows the total number of women in each Congress who have served at least four terms in office.⁶² Throughout the 1980s as well as the 1990s, the number of Republican and Democratic women with at least eight years of experience in Congress was virtually the same. These trends have diverged sharply over the past decade, in part because of the 1992 cohort, but this figure has increased on the Democratic side in nearly every Congress since then as well.

⁶² The same pattern emerges when examining the number of women who have served for longer periods (i.e., 5-10 terms). For example, of the 19 women in the 111th Congress who have been in office for at least eight terms, 16 are Democrats and three are Republicans.

Figure 5.1: The Total Number of Women in Each Congressional Session who Have Served for At Least Four Terms, By Party (1981-2010)



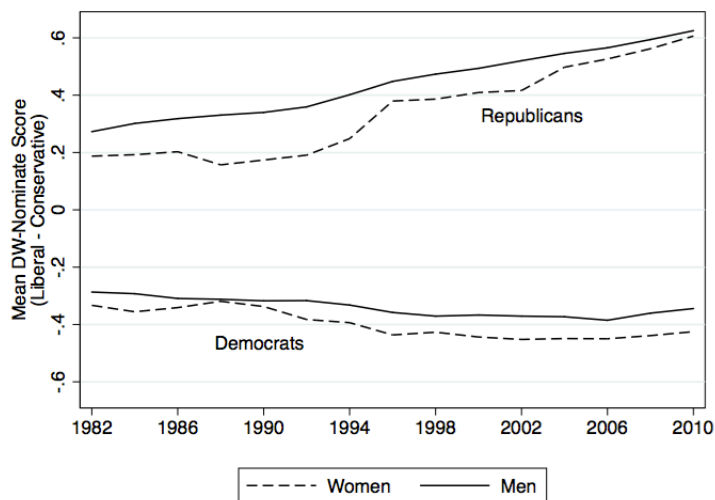
Source: Data from Evans and Swain (2012).

What these aggregate differences in length of service mask is how the ideological profile of Republican and Democratic women in Congress has also changed over time. The Democratic women in Figure 5.1 are comprised of both those who have served continuously since the 1990s as well as some who were more newly elected. Of the 32 Democratic women in the previous 111th Congress (2009-2010) who had been in office for at least four terms, 26 were elected prior to 2000 (and as noted above, 21 are in Congress today). Because there has been such a large carryover of Democratic women, their ideological profile has remained relatively the same since the 1990s. By comparison, of the 10 Republican women in the 111th Congress with similar levels of experience, only 6 were elected before 2000 (and again, only two are currently in Congress). This near-complete turnover of Republican women over the past thirty years has resulted in dramatic ideological shifts among GOP women in Congress (see Frederick 2009).

Figure 5.2 shows the average DW-NOMINATE score of male and female members of Congress for both parties (Poole and Rosenthal 2007). Higher (lower) values indicate more conservative (liberal) ideological positions. Democratic women have consistently been to the

left of their male co-partisans, but again, the ideological changes among Democratic women have been relatively minor. From 1982 to 2010, the average ideology score of female Democrats shifted from -0.33 to -0.42. The fate of women in the GOP has been much different. Republican women in the 97th Congress (1981-82) had an average ideology score of 0.19, but this score increased to 0.61 in the 111th Congress (2009-2010). While Republican women were a moderate faction in their party throughout the 1980s and 1990s, they are now ideologically indistinguishable from their male counterparts (Frederick 2009). In short, the Olympia Snowes (ME) and Nancy Johnsons (CT) of yesterday have been replaced by the Michele Bachmanns (MN) and Marsha Blackburns (TN) of today. And these new Republican women are mirror ideological images of the Paul Ryans (WI) and Eric Cantors (VA) that now dominate the GOP caucus.

Figure 5.2: The Average Ideology Scores of Male and Female Members of Congress, By Party (1981-2010)



Source: DW-NOMINATE scores from Poole and Rosenthal (2007).

This difference in length of congressional service between Republican and Democratic women has important implications for the partisan disparity of women in Congress. On the

Democratic side, women have continued to grow their ranks in Congress because the party has both retained those who were elected in the 1990s and elected new women to office in more recent years. This bodes well for overall levels of female representation in the Democratic Party, and it also creates additional opportunities for advancement to leadership positions. However, there has been a near-complete overhaul of Republican congresswomen since the 1990s, which matters not only for levels of female representation in the GOP, but also for their ability to obtain influential positions in Congress. In order for the partisan gap to decrease, it is crucial that, like the Democrats, the Republican Party can retain existing female members of Congress and elect new women to the party as well.

Member Retention and Levels of Female Representation

The main conclusion that emerged from the gender and politics literature in the 1990s was that “when women run, women win.” Scholars found that women candidates raised as much money and garnered as many votes as similarly situated male candidates (e.g., Burrell 1994; Darcy et al. 1994; Seltzer et al. 1997), and the electoral environment was shown to be largely gender-neutral. Research on why women are underrepresented in political office thus shifted almost completely toward the issue of candidate emergence (but see Lawless and Theriault 2005), and the question of why women are less likely to run for elective office would guide gender and politics research for the next decade. Lawless and Fox (2005, 2010) were at the forefront of this work, and they demonstrated that women have lower levels of political ambition than men and that women consider themselves less qualified to run for office. Their findings reconciled the puzzle of how the political system could be free of gender bias but levels of women’s representation could nevertheless plateau.

The emphasis on candidate emergence has, however, come at the expense of fully understanding other reasons for why women continue to be underrepresented in politics, such as why some women remain in office and others do not. In fact, despite these dramatic partisan differences in congressional service, there is virtually no research on how patterns of member retention have implications for the numeric representation of women. Studies of female representation focus either on the electoral environment—i.e., campaign receipts and vote totals (e.g., Burrell 1994; Darcy et al. 1994; Seltzer et al. 1997)—or the institutional environment—i.e., whether female legislators promote different types of policy issues (Swers 2002; Dodson 2006). Rarely do these research agendas overlap, and women as candidates and women as officeholders are examined largely in isolation. Lawless and Theriault (2005) provide the single exception, and they find that women are more likely than men to retire from Congress when they reach their “career ceiling” and their ability to influence the legislative agenda stalls.

Yet, their analysis does not account for member ideology, and it is possible that the ideological distribution of the women in their sample has implications for the interpretation of the results. Their data extend from 1983 to 2002, and women in both parties were more likely to be to the left of their male counterparts during this period (see Figure 5.2). Because Republican women in particular were disproportionately likely to be moderates, reaching their career ceiling may therefore have more to do with their maverick ideological preferences than their gender. We may also see different results on the Democratic side in recent years given that the disproportionate turnover of moderates (who were largely men) has allowed Democratic women to reach new heights in leadership positions. More generally, the striking differences in tenure and ideology across female MCs suggest that it is crucial to re-examine the question of member retirement along partisan lines. Partisan polarization in Congress has increased with almost each

election cycle, and we need to understand whether changes in the political environment have differentially affected the representation of female Republicans and Democrats in congressional office. Like Lawless and Theriault (2005), I consider the retention of women legislators to be an additional mechanism through which gender parity in Congress can be promoted or hindered. However, because ideology and gender have intersected in important ways over the last thirty years, I take a different approach that puts member ideology, rather than gender, at the center of analysis. I utilize insights from the congressional retirement literature to explore how the widespread replacement of ideological moderates has implications for the growing partisan disparity in women's representation in Congress.

The Implications of the Party Fit Hypothesis for Member Retirement

The party fit hypothesis suggests that the ideological reputation of a party conveys important information about the type of politician that belongs in the party. We can examine the impact of party fit on candidate emergence as well as member retention. The actor is different, but the underlying argument remains the same: I expect that members in Congress who are ideological outliers are more likely to retire from office than those who conform to their party's reputation. The implications of the party fit hypothesis vary by political context, but in the contemporary Congress, ideological outliers are those with moderate policy preferences.

Again, ideological moderates may believe it will be difficult to achieve their electoral and policy goals in a polarized congressional environment. For one, members of Congress are acutely aware of those who struggle at the ballot box. The ranks of moderates have dwindled after nearly every recent election, and the possibility of facing a primary challenge is especially ominous for those in the ideological middle. In addition, party leaders exercise strict control

over the legislative agenda (Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008), and it may be difficult or even impossible for ideological moderates to have any real policy impact. Indeed, when Olympia Snowe decided not to seek re-election, she expressed skepticism over how productive an additional term would be amidst the “my way or the highway” ideologies that pervade Congress today. Worse yet, moderates experience intense pressure to support policies they deem *undesirable*. Party non-conformists may prefer to retire rather than serve in a congressional environment that is both personally hostile and professionally unrewarding.

Thus, the party fit hypothesis suggests that in the contemporary context, ideologically moderate members of the U.S. House—liberal Republicans and conservative Democrats—are less likely to run for re-election than those at the ideological poles. Specifically, the more liberal the Republican MC, the more likely she is to leave the House chamber; the more conservative the Democratic MC, the more likely she is to do so. However, the size of the effect may differ by party due to variation in the heterogeneity of the two parties. There have been a number of prominent Republicans who have expressed discontent with the direction of their party. For example, Senator Olympia Snowe’s (2013) recent book bemoans the increase in polarization as well as the dramatic rightward shift of the Republican Party, and other moderate Republicans like Christine Todd Whitman, Lincoln Chafee, and Bob Dole have openly criticized the GOP’s kowtowing to the far-right faction of the party. A comparable contingent of critics has not emerged on the Democratic side, however. The party may not seem as distant to moderate Democrats in Congress because there are a handful of moderates to work with on policy issues.

It is important to emphasize that the party fit hypothesis is not gender-specific, meaning that the mechanisms work in similar ways for men and women, though these patterns are hypothesized to have important gendered implications. As noted above, Republican women

were more likely to be ideological moderates than their male counterparts during much of this time period, while Democratic women were (and still are) less likely to be moderates than their male co-partisans. Because of the ideological distribution of female MCs, the rise in partisan polarization and the gradual retirement of those in the ideological center is expected to be a contributing factor in the growing partisan gap among women in Congress.

The expectations of the theory are in line with previous findings in the congressional retirement literature. It is well known that ideological outliers are more likely to retire than party conformists (Hibbing 1982; Brace 1995; Moore and Hibbing 1998). The party fit hypothesis makes a similar prediction, though this chapter builds on existing research in two important ways. First, the congressional literature has overlooked how differential retirement decisions at the individual level matter for broader trends in partisan polarization in Congress. The decision to retire has largely been framed in cost-benefit terms, with members opting to leave if the benefits of remaining in office are lower than the costs (e.g., Jacobson and Kernell 1983; see also Black 1972). Assessments of party fit are also at the individual level, as this evaluation is centered on members' ability to achieve their electoral and policy goals. However, if there is a sizeable faction of members that are collectively dropping out, this has consequences for the ideological makeup of the institution as a whole. Such a conclusion is far from groundbreaking, but the explicit connection between the retirement decisions of ideological moderates and the persistence of partisan polarization in Congress has, to my knowledge, yet to be made.⁶³

Second, and perhaps more importantly here, this chapter offers an additional explanation for the partisan imbalance of women in Congress. While member ideology and gender have been studied extensively in isolation, little attention has been given to the ways in which these

⁶³ To be sure, scholars have suggested that much of the rise in polarization has been driven by member replacement (Fleisher and Bond 2003; Theriault 2006), but this does not differentiate between members who leave voluntarily and members who lose.

two variables interact. This is a surprising omission in light of the stark variation in congressional tenure and ideological profiles of Republican and Democratic women, and it is a very short leap to extend the findings on strategic retirement to the question of women's representation. This analysis is the first to apply the insights from the retirement literature to explain the complete makeover of Republican congresswomen and the partisan gap in female representation.

Data and Method

I use quantitative data on member retirement to explore how the replacement of moderates has impacted the partisan gap among women in Congress. The dataset extends from the 97th Congress to the 111th Congress (1981-2010), and it includes every member who resigns or is up for re-election in each two-year cycle (Evans and Swain 2012).⁶⁴ The dependent variable is a dummy variable that is coded one if the member tried to leave the House chamber and zero if she tried to remain in office. Tried to leave (1) includes those who did not seek re-election, retired, resigned from politics, sought or accepted another office, or went to the Senate; tried to stay (0) includes those who were re-elected and those who ran but were defeated in the primary or general election.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Sean Evans and John Swain compiled the dataset; they collected the data from ICPSR's *Roster of U.S. Congressional Officeholders and Biographical Characteristics of Members of the U.S. Congress, 1789-1996, Merged Data, Study #7803* and the *Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress*. I follow the coding procedures in Evans and Swain (2012) unless noted otherwise. Descriptive statistics of all variables are provided in Appendix C.1.

⁶⁵ I also ran the models with "Tried to Leave Political Office" as the dependent variable, where *Tried to Leave* excludes those who sought or accepted another office and those who went to the Senate. This coding decision is partially a question of what "the party" is. The party is understood here to be a single unit, but the legislative institution also has implications for legislators' ability to achieve their goals (members can be more independent as governors or senators, for example). I focus on the likelihood of leaving the House chamber here, as the research question concerns empirical trends in the House.

The main independent variable is the legislator's ideological fit with her party. As noted above, moderates may find it difficult to achieve their policy goals in such a polarized congressional environment, and those in the ideological middle may prefer retirement to the hostility and pressure they will face in future legislative sessions. Because the size of the effect may differ by party, I use separate models for Republicans and Democrats. Legislator ideology is measured with DW-NOMINATE scores (Poole and Rosenthal 2007); higher (lower) values indicate more moderate (extreme) positions. I also include a dummy variable for the member's gender, but I do not posit an effect between the gender of the legislator and her decision to retire. Again, the differential retention rates of Democratic and Republican women in Congress are hypothesized to be a function of their ideological preferences, not their gender.⁶⁶

The retirement literature has highlighted a variety of personal, electoral, and institutional factors that collectively influence the decision to leave office.⁶⁷ First, older legislators and those who took a term limits pledge are more likely to retire from office (e.g., Brace 1984; Hibbing 1982; Lawless and Theriault 2005; Evans and Swain 2012). Members who were involved in a scandal are more likely to leave office as well (Alford et al. 1994; Jacobson and Dimock 1994). Second, incumbents who won their last election by a small margin and those whose districts are seriously altered by redistricting are less likely to seek re-election (Bullock 1972; Groseclose and Krehbiel 1994; Moore and Hibbing 1998; Hall and Van Houweling 1995; Kiewiet and Zeng 1993). Third, those in party and committee leadership positions are less likely to retire from the House (Groseclose and Krehbiel 1994; Hall and Van Houweling 1995), while senior members

⁶⁶ I also ran the models with an interaction term for the member's ideology and gender. The interaction term does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, which conforms to the argument here. These results are provided in Appendix C.2.

⁶⁷ See Evans and Swain (2012) for a full description of these variables.

who were denied committee chairmanships or lost their chair positions due to institutional reforms are more likely to do so (Lawless and Theriault 2005; Evans and Swain 2012).

Results

I use a logistic regression to analyze the decision to leave the House chamber for every representative from the 97th Congress to the 111th Congress (1981-2010).⁶⁸ There are a total of 6,535 individual member decisions to retire from the House (3,001 Republicans and 3,534 Democrats), with 573 legislators choosing to do so during this time period (302 Republicans and 271 Democrats).⁶⁹ For Republicans, the number of retirements per Congress ranged from a low of 10 in the 100th Congress (1987-1988) to a high of 30 in the 110th Congress (2007-2008); the Democrats had a low of 7 retirements in the 106th Congress (1999-2000) and a high of 42 in the 102nd Congress (1991-1992).

The results from the model are shown in Table 5.1 below. Most of the control variables conform to expectations, though not all reach conventional levels of statistical significance. On the Republican side, older legislators, those who took a term limits pledge, and those who were involved in a scandal are more likely to leave the House chamber. The probability of retirement from the House is also higher for legislators who lost their chair positions due to reforms and for senior members who were denied chairmanships. Similarly, among Democrats, older legislators, those involved in a scandal, and members whose districts were altered by redistricting are more likely to leave the House. The likelihood of leaving the House chamber is lower for members

⁶⁸ The model includes Congress dummy variables to account for any additional factors that might influence the probability of retiring. Because of this, I do not control for minority party status or bad year for the president's party in the model (as the controls would not vary given the party-specific models).

⁶⁹ This figure is slightly higher than the retirement rate cited in other studies (e.g., Lawless and Theriault 2005), because I include those who seek higher office in the analysis here.

who are committee chairs. Female Democratic members are also less likely to retire than their male counterparts, perhaps because they tend to represent safer districts (Palmer and Simon 2008), which may be due to their more liberal ideological leanings as well.

Table 5.1: The Determinants of Member Retirement, By Party (1981-2010)

| | Republican MCs | Democratic MCs |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Member Ideology (Republican Liberalism; Democratic Conservatism) | 1.01** (0.40) | 1.41*** (0.38) |
| Woman | 0.02 (0.21) | -0.64*** (0.23) |
| Age | 0.03*** (0.01) | 0.04*** (0.01) |
| Took a Term Limits Pledge | 0.74*** (0.20) | 0.43 (0.44) |
| Involvement in a Scandal | 1.38*** (0.33) | 0.69** (0.32) |
| Previous Vote Share | -0.42 (0.51) | 0.13 (0.44) |
| Hostile Redistricting | 0.40 (0.39) | 0.86** (0.32) |
| Committee Chair | 0.39 (0.30) | -0.90** (0.36) |
| Party Leader | -0.33 (0.43) | -0.45 (0.85) |
| Removed from Chair Position | 1.29*** (0.50) | 1.18 (0.78) |
| Denied Chair Despite Seniority | 1.12** (0.47) | 0.93 (0.89) |
| Constant | -2.96*** (0.57) | -4.15*** (0.52) |
| Number of Observations | 3,001 | 3,534 |
| Log-Likelihood | -927.99 | -883.69 |

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by individual in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the member of Congress voluntarily left the House chamber and 0 otherwise. Congress fixed effects are included in both of the models.

***=p<0.01, **=p<0.05, *=p<0.10.

The main independent variable of interest, the legislator's ideology, is statistically significant in both models. The results in Column 1 show that moderate Republicans are more

likely to retire from the House chamber than their conservative counterparts. A one standard deviation increase in Republican liberalism leads to a 1.5 percentage point increase in the probability of leaving the House chamber. The magnitude of this effect is sizeable given that only about 10% of all Republican decisions were to voluntarily leave the House during this time. We can also calculate the probability of retiring from the House chamber for actual members of Congress. Table 5.2 shows the predicted probability of leaving the House for ideological moderates like Connie Morella (MD) and Olympia Snowe (ME) and for conservatives like Michele Bachmann (MN) and Marsha Blackburn (TN). The probability of retirement varies markedly across female Republicans in Congress, more than doubling with an ideological shift from Blackburn to Morella. But what is noteworthy is that a similar pattern emerges among male representatives as well. As illustrated below, the probability that ideological moderates like Sherwood Boehlert (NY) and Steven LaTourette (OH) decide to leave the House chamber is much larger than that for ideological conservatives like Eric Cantor (VA) and Paul Ryan (WI).⁷⁰

Table 5.2: Predicted Probability of Voluntarily Leaving the House Chamber Across Republican Members of Congress, By Gender (1981-2010)

| Women | | Men | |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| Marsha Blackburn (TN) | 6.0% | Paul Ryan (WI) | 5.6% |
| Michele Bachmann (MN) | 6.4% | Eric Cantor (VA) | 5.9% |
| Olympia Snowe (ME) | 11.2% | Steven LaTourette (OH) | 9.1% |
| Connie Morella (MD) | 12.5% | Sherwood Boehlert (NY) | 11.8% |

Note: Members are ordered from ideologically conservative to ideologically liberal.

The retirement decisions of Democratic members largely resemble those of Republicans in Congress, with moderate Democrats also more likely to leave the House chamber than their

⁷⁰ Marsha Blackburn, Michele Bachmann, Olympia Snowe, and Connie Morella have DW-NOMINATE scores of 0.75, 0.67, 0.07, and -0.06, respectively (from conservative to liberal); Paul Ryan, Eric Cantor, Steven LaTourette, and Sherwood Boehlert have DW-NOMINATE scores of 0.81, 0.75, 0.28, and -0.01, respectively. They were recoded so that higher scores indicate more liberal positions.

liberal co-partisans. A one standard deviation increase in Democratic conservatism leads to a 1.7 percentage point increase in the probability of leaving the House chamber. The likelihood of retirement varies across both male and female Democrats in Congress as well. As noted above, the probability of leaving is significantly lower for Democratic women than it is for Democratic men, perhaps because of the kinds of districts they tend to represent (Palmer and Simon 2008). We can again calculate the likelihood of leaving the chamber for actual members of Congress. Table 5.3 presents the predicted probability of retiring from the House for ideological conservatives like Beverly Byron (MD) and Richard Shelby (AL) and for liberals like Dennis Kucinich (CA) and Maxine Waters (CA). As shown below, for male and female Democrats with conservative ideology scores, the probability of voluntarily leaving the House is in some cases more than double what it is for Democrats with liberal scores.⁷¹

Table 5.3: Predicted Probability of Voluntarily Leaving the House Chamber Across Democratic Members of Congress, By Gender (1981-2010)

| Women | | Men | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|-------|
| Maxine Waters (CA) | 2.4% | Dennis Kucinich (OH) | 4.1% |
| Nancy Pelosi (CA) | 2.9% | Mike Capuano (MA) | 4.9% |
| Marcy Kaptur (OH) | 4.4% | Jim Matheson (UT) | 9.1% |
| Beverly Byron (MD) | 6.1% | Richard Shelby (AL) | 11.4% |

Note: Members are ordered from ideologically liberal to ideologically conservative.

While the relationship between ideology and the decision to leave the House is statistically significant for both Democrats and Republicans, the actual retirement rates for members of Congress do vary slightly by party. For Democrats, of the 3,534 individual member decisions to retire analyzed here, 271 of them, or 7.7% of the total, were to leave the House

⁷¹ Maxine Waters, Nancy Pelosi, Marcy Kaptur, and Beverly Byron have DW-NOMINATE scores of -0.70, -0.58, -0.27, and -0.01, respectively (from liberal to conservative); Dennis Kucinich, Mike Capuano, Jim Matheson, and Richard Selby have DW-NOMINATE scores of -0.77, -0.63, -0.16, and 0.03, respectively. Higher scores indicate more conservative positions.

chamber. By contrast, of the 3,002 decisions on the Republican side, 302 of them, or 10.1% of the total, were to retire from the House. (These differences are significant at $p < 0.01$.) The results are even starker if we collapse the data by member, rather than member decisions, to examine whether a member voluntarily left the chamber during her career. Approximately 48% of Republicans in Congress ultimately chose to leave the House, compared to 40% of Democrats ($p < 0.01$). What is perhaps most important for party fit, though, are the retirement rates of members who are ideological outliers in their party. An amazing 56% of Republicans in the liberal half of their party opted to leave the House during this time period, compared to 42% of Democrats in the conservative half of their party ($p < 0.01$).

In terms of gender, we can further analyze how the ideological distribution of women in both parties interacts with member retirement patterns. Again collapsing the data by member, the 19 Republican congresswomen who served in the 1980s and 1990s were nearly four times more likely to be in the liberal half of the party delegation than the conservative half. Of the 15 GOP women in the liberal half, 14 of them decided not to seek re-election to the House, versus one of four women in the conservative half of the Republican delegation. Across the entire sample (1981-2010), 16 of the 24 Republican women in the liberal half of the GOP delegation voluntarily left the House chamber (67%), as opposed to 161 of the 294 Republican men in the ideological left of the GOP party mean who also did so (55%). These differences are not statistically significant, but due to the comparative size of their ranks, the result was to disproportionately cut the ground out from Republican women. On the Democratic side, there were 32 women in the conservative half of their party delegation during this time period, compared to 69 women in the liberal half of their party. The increased probability of retirement among ideological moderates had less of an effect on Democratic women given their more

liberal ideological leanings. In short, while previous research has largely examined differences between men and women, scholars must explore how ideological variation across men and women also matters for female representation in Congress.

Summary

While the Democratic Party has both retained senior female MCs and added new women to their ranks, there has been a near complete turnover of women in the GOP delegation during this time. These partisan differences in length of congressional tenure have important consequences for their ability to obtain influential positions in the chamber. I suggest that widespread replacement of ideological moderates has had an adverse effect on the representation of Republican women because they have historically been to the ideological left of their male co-partisans. By comparison, Democratic women were (and still are) less likely to be ideological moderates than their male co-partisans, and the rise in polarization has not had a similar effect on the representation of Democratic women. Moderates on both sides have all but disappeared from the policymaking process, and the findings shed light on how differential rates of member retirement matter for the growing partisan disparity among women in Congress. The qualitative data in the next chapter reveal the kinds of experiences that moderate MCs had during this time and probe deeper into the mechanisms that underlie these aggregate retirement patterns.

Chapter 6: Why Congressional Service Is Not What It Used To Be

The Tuesday Group of moderate Republicans was formed in 1994, shortly after the GOP takeover of the House. It consisted of about 40 Republican members who met weekly for lunch in the basement of the Capitol building. They sought to provide a counterbalance to the growing right wing of the party, and its members have historically been more moderate on a range of issues such as environmental protection, reproductive rights, and social welfare programs. The Tuesday Group, also known as the Tuesday Lunch Bunch, provided a forum for moderates to discuss their policy priorities. In their own quiet way, members of the Tuesday Group worked largely from behind the scenes to help shape legislative outcomes (Zwick 2011).

There are similar groups of moderates on the Democratic side. The Blue Dog Coalition is perhaps the most well known of these at the moment, and it was founded in 1995. Members of the Blue Dog Coalition tend to be more conservative on social issues such as gun control, abortion, and immigration, though the caucus has never taken a formal position on these issues. They are strongly united, however, in their adherence to fiscal conservatism. The Blue Dogs have played a key role in the drafting of legislation, including the Affordable Care Act, though like the Tuesday Group, their influence has waxed and waned over the years (Kane 2014).

Between 1980 and 2010, ideological centrists never comprised a majority of either the Republican or Democratic caucus. However, the size and clout of the moderate coalitions have changed during this time. The Blue Dogs have suffered substantial losses in recent years, and its membership has shrunk to a paltry 15, down from 54 in the 111th Congress (2009-10) (Bland 2014). In 2010 alone, they lost more than half of their members to retirement or defeat, and the recent retirement announcements of Representatives Jim Matheson (D-UT) and Mike McIntyre (D-NC) do not bode well for the future of the Blue Dog Coalition. The Tuesday Group has

remained similar in size, holding steady at around 40 members, but the clout of the group is widely perceived to have diminished. For example, following the 2010 elections, the *New Republic* ran an article on the Tuesday Group titled “Tuesday Mourning.” The rise in partisan polarization and the shifting size, influence, and makeup of these moderate coalitions have had important effects on members’ ability to achieve their goals in Congress, namely their ability to affect policy outcomes and obtain an influential position in the chamber (Fenno 1973).

Data and Method

To better understand how the partisan environment influenced the experiences moderates had during this time, I conducted 22 elite-level interviews with former members of Congress, congressional staff members, and party elites involved in congressional campaigns and elections. I interviewed a total of 18 former members of Congress, 12 Republicans and 6 Democrats. The U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress (FMC) connected me with members of their organization, and I selected individuals based on their DW-NOMINATE scores (Poole and Rosenthal 2007). All of them were ideological moderates in their party—liberal Republicans and conservative Democrats—though the extent to which they bucked the party line varied. Most of the members belonged to at least one of the moderate groups in Congress, such as the Tuesday Group and the Republican Main Street Partnership on the Republican side or the Blue Dog Coalition and the New Democrat Coalition on the Democratic side. In addition, they represented a range of geographical areas, though many of the Republicans came from the Northeast and many of the Democrats came from Southern districts due to historical patterns of partisan alignments. Some members also referred me to former members of their staff and to individuals who held high-level party positions during various congressional election cycles.

Achieving their Policy Goals

In a 2013 article in the *National Review*, former moderate Republican Congressman Steven LaTourette discussed the current impact of the Tuesday Group: “It’s a question of numbers. If you think that the [conservative] Republican Study Committee has 150 members out of 233 and the Tuesday Group’s sitting at 36, 40—well, the math doesn’t work in their favor” (Strong 2013). Yet just 30 years ago, ideological centrists were in a much better bargaining position. A moderate Republican who served in Congress for nearly 25 years described how, during the Reagan years, those in this “small hardy band of moderates” were courted by the Administration. After he got invited to “yet another” function at the White House, he recalled a conservative Republican colleague saying, jokingly, “I support the Administration all the time and eat cold pizza in my office, and you’re down at the White House eating the high on the hog.” This member elaborated on the treatment that was given to partisan non-conformists:

“We were paid more attention to. My feeling is that if you’re entirely predictable, then you’re ignored and taken for granted—either he’s going to be with us or he’ll never be with us. For those who don’t always agree with the party position, they’re the ones that are paid the most attention. During the Clinton years, there were steak dinners. (Laughs) My wife and I had a wonderful time, socially, at the Clinton White House. I was frequently, not the majority of the time, but frequently in the camp of those who were following the wishes of the Clinton administration in terms of legislation. It wasn’t because we wanted invitations to have lunch, it’s because we supported a higher minimum wage, environmental issues, a whole bunch of things (1/14/2013).

On the Democratic side, a member who held office in the 1990s and early 2000s agreed that moderate Democrats had a sizeable policy impact during this time as well: “[I was part of] a group of about 35 or 40 members that were pretty significant. If President Clinton had us on his side, then we were going to sustain the [presidential] veto and he could effectively rule with less than a majority in Congress. That was an era of moderate fiscal Democrats having influence. That group of Democrats was the linchpin in Clinton being able to govern” (1/18/2013).

With respect to the impact of the Tuesday Group, a veteran moderate Republican said, “The moderates [and the Tuesday Group] used to mean something. They were oftentimes the difference on whether legislation would pass or fail” (1/14/2013). Another member explained, “We would appoint a delegation to see the Speaker, Majority Leader, or Whip, and say I’ve got 40 votes in my pocket that are no unless you bend the policy. We were a force to be reckoned with. If we didn’t go with them, they didn’t have a majority. We could influence policy on a daily basis” (4/2/2013).

This member of the Tuesday Group gave one specific example of how the moderates used their leverage to influence policy. Every year in the appropriations process, when domestic family planning came up, the conservatives always had an amendment that required parental consent for birth control. Every year this member would bring an amendment to the floor to strike the parental consent clause, and he would win because the Democrats voted for it as well as the moderate Republicans. The conservatives “got tired of getting their butts ripped on this one,” so one year they went to the whip and asked that he make sure that this member’s amendment was not made in order. He explained that in order to offer an amendment, members have to go to the Rules Committee the day before the debate, present their amendment, and ask the Rules Committee for permission to make it in order. He was always granted this opportunity, but that year he found out that the Rules Committee was not going to make his amendment in order. The day before the family planning vote, the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill was up. The bill was controversial; no Democrats were going to vote for it, and virtually every Republican had to be present for that vote. At the Tuesday Group meeting, the member told his colleagues that the whip had given the Rules Committee quiet orders to make his amendment on

parental consent out of order. He said that he needed everybody in the Group to vote no on the Foreign Operations bill that afternoon.

When the vote on the Foreign Operations bill came, this member was at the floor early and he had his thumb down. They had fifteen minutes to complete the vote. He said “his friends” were walking in and putting their voting cards in the machine. As requested, they were pushing the red button for no. The whip and his team were puzzled and completely taken by surprise by the red votes on the board. When the whip’s staff saw this member with his thumb down, the whip ran up to the member. He described the exchange that unfolded:

[The whip] literally grabbed me by the tie and said, “You can’t take this bill down just because you’re mad about your amendment for tomorrow.” Now there are about three minutes left in this vote. I said, “Look at the vote, it’s going down. I think what you mean to say to me is that what I am doing is not very nice.” “Well it’s not very nice!” I said, “What you’re doing to me on this family planning thing is not very nice either.” The whip replied, “Alright, I will not tell the Rules Committee not to make your amendment in order.” Now there’s like a minute left. I said, “Nah, you’ve got to tell me that they will make it in order.” He agreed, “Okay, your amendment will be made in order.” Now there’s about 30 seconds left. I said, “You have to tell me one more thing.” “What’s that?” “You have to tell me that I’m pretty.” “Alright, you’re pretty!” I put my thumb up, everyone switched their votes, and the bill passed. The next day, my amendment was in order, and we won (4/2/2013).

Yet much of this policy work was done quietly and behind the scenes. An additional factor that shaped the influence of the Tuesday Group was their level of cohesion and the cohesiveness of the conservative faction of the party. One Republican remarked, “The conservatives were much larger of a group, but they were always divided. [The leadership] could often deal with us and combine our support [with theirs].” This same member commented, “We were big enough, cohesive enough. We did a lot more to keep things off the floor and to adjust them before they came on the floor” (1/23/2013). The Republican whip at the time used to ask prominent moderate members how this group would respond to various pieces of

legislation: “He would quiz me, ‘If we did this, what would your people think?’ That’s what he’d say, ‘your people.’ He wasn’t trying to get information to change his mind, but he would get intelligence to guide his decisions. He would gauge the degree of my response—either ‘all hell would break loose’ or ‘well, you’re going to get opposition’” (1/14/2013).

One high-level staffer of a former moderate GOP congressman agreed that the influence of moderates in the 1990s was rooted in their numbers. He explained, “You matter to the extent that your votes matter. The whip paid attention to moderates not because he liked moderates but because he knew we controlled a bloc of votes. If we’d get [the votes], he wouldn’t run over us, and that’s fair. The moderates were courted by the White House, by outside interest groups, and by party leaders. Swing votes are what matter, so as long as you’re a swing vote, people are going to be after you” (1/22/2013). In this case, having people “be after you” is a good thing. Moderates were able to put pressure on the party leadership and wield some control over the legislative agenda, though still almost certainly not to the same degree as party conformists. Nevertheless, the moderates of yesterday had a sizeable impact on policy because they could show their votes. They banded together on a wide range of policies including environmental regulations, labor protections, reproductive rights, and stem cell research.

However, as the makeup of the party caucus changed, so too did the experiences of these moderates. When asked how his congressional career evolved, a former moderate Republican stated, “Early on, it was easier to be moderate than it was when the party became more conservative and more Southern. President George W. Bush was when it really started to change. Through H.W. Bush and the Clinton era, being a moderate was a pretty cool thing because you could make deals with the other side. But during the Bush administration, people got dug in on both sides and it made it really hard” (1/23/2013). For the moderates of yesterday,

life in Congress became more and more challenging as time went on, and their waning numbers made it increasingly difficult to shape the legislative agenda.

To be sure, the formal membership of the Tuesday Group has not declined in the same way the Blue Dogs' has, but its ideological center has moved to the right. Even Representative Charlie Dent (R-PA), the current co-chair of the Group, has said that its members are "a little more conservative today" than when he first joined. Abramowitz puts it more directly: the current members of the Tuesday Group may be "stylistically more moderate" in terms of language or presentation, "but their voting records say otherwise" (quoted in Zwick 2011). For the moderates of yesterday, this new crop of members made less than desirable allies. One high-level staffer that I interviewed highlighted these internal divisions: "Every single time we talk, [the Congressman] will say, 'Boy, did I leave at the right time. If we had stayed, we wouldn't have been able to work the way we did because there wouldn't have been anyone to work with. The fierceness is getting more and more, and it would be very hard' (1/22/2013). It also became harder to forge bipartisan coalitions. As one member noted, "You can't go across the aisle like you used to to get things done. People come here to get things done. They came to help their community, get things fixed in their community, get things built, and create a better quality of life. You can't do that now. It does change the reward for all the sacrifices you make to be there" (1/23/2013).

Advancing in the Chamber

It also became virtually impossible for moderates to obtain a leadership position or even a choice committee assignment. One moderate Republican remarked, "[If you were a moderate] you couldn't get elected to any position of conference leadership. I did run for that once, but

someone else won. After that I never ran for leadership.” I asked this member if she thought she was not able to get such a leadership post because of her ideology. She replied, “That was my conclusion” (1/23/2013). Those in the Tuesday Group did try to get an edge into leadership, but “they gave us positions of no power, name only... We knew that we could not stand for leadership in any capacity” (1/24/2013). This is nevertheless understandable given the shifting ideological center of the parties. There was little incentive for the dominant faction of the party to be represented by the moderate minority.

Party loyalty was and remains an influential factor in the distribution of party rewards. One moderate Republican put it very simply, “There is no question that committee assignments were allocated in such a way” (2/7/2013). Another member elaborated, “If you dare deviate too much from the party line, at least within the GOP circles, you pay a penalty in some cases. The next time comes around and you want a better committee assignment, you’re given little attention. I never had a chance of getting Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, or Appropriations because I deviated too much from the party position.” With respect to whether his ideology was a factor in why he received his particular committee assignment, he replied, “No question about it. For most people, their voting record determines how they’re treated in terms of requested committee assignments. Freshmen are interviewed by the committee chair, and if the chair discovers that you believe in climate change, you don’t have a chance in getting on that committee” (1/14/2013).

In fact, many of the moderate Republicans had stories of how they were denied committee positions or demoted to lower-tier committees. One member explained how, in not granting her request, the leadership even purported to be acting in the member’s best interest: “When I wanted to get on Appropriations, [the leadership told me,] ‘We don’t want to put you on

the spot, because you'd have to vote on some of those issues and your constituency wouldn't like it. You can't be the renegade on Appropriations; you have to cooperate. And you don't want to do that; it would be terrible.'" She then added, "It was all phony, but nevertheless" (1/22/2013). Another moderate recalled how, after expressing interest in being a subcommittee chair, Speaker Gingrich told him, "Sure, you can." Then Gingrich rescinded the offer because, this member was told, "Grover Norquist doesn't want this" (3/14/2013). The Speaker never gave the congressman an explanation, but he suspected it was because he was too moderate.

Another member who served on the Transportation Committee for over a decade gave this account: "When we lost the majority in 2006, [the ranking member] determined that my future wasn't on the railroad subcommittee, it was on the Coast Guard subcommittee, which was not a very good post. I objected, and he said, 'Well, it's your labor votes. We can't have you do that.' I went to [the Speaker] and he said he'd talk to [the ranking member]. He did, and it didn't make any difference." The member concluded, "They can't kill you, but what they can do is indicate, well, you're done. You're not going to be in charge of railroads anymore" (2/28/2013). The institutional fates of a handful of other moderate Republicans were even worse. One high-level staffer explained, "Since 1995, when they made [committee assignments] leadership driven, not seniority driven, there are a number of members who have never gotten chairmanships they would have gotten under seniority because they were viewed as not sufficiently reliable" (1/22/2013).

The experience of one former member who sat on the Appropriations Committee provides a rich illustration of how the allocation of committee assignments has changed in recent years. He recalled that in the late 1980s and 1990s, the leadership was less concerned with the member's ideology: "[With respect to the Appropriations Committee,] they just wanted

somebody who was respected, hardworking, conscientious; there was no litmus test. More and more, there's a litmus test. On both sides. [Then] it was just politics, it was who was better organized and who could make the best case." I asked this member whether he was ever subjected to an ideological litmus test. "There was one test," he said.

"I was a subcommittee chairman on Appropriations. When there was an election, I was of course re-elected [as subcommittee chair]. The leadership had given more power to the Steering Committee so the Steering Committee had more control over who got what positions. I remember going in there one time. I had to interview with them as a subcommittee chair on Appropriations. They interviewed the full committee chairman and the subcommittee chairmen on Appropriations because Appropriations was so powerful and so important. The Steering Committee votes on who gets these chairmanships. They make a recommendation to the conference, and the conference basically ratifies it. So when I went before the steering committee, one specific member really grilled me about spending, really came after me. It was the first time that my Republican credentials were questioned, and she didn't really have the votes to stop me. But she made it very clear. I didn't know whether she was doing her own bidding or someone else's bidding, but in any event, I got it" (1/23/2013).

This member suggested that the ideological makeup of the Steering Committee in the 1990s, then the Committee on Committees, might have mattered for committee assignments then as well. He said, "I knew when I went to Washington [that I wanted to be on Appropriations], so I had a plan and I followed the plan and it worked." But, the member noted, "If I had tried this maybe ten years later, I might have had a problem because more of the decisions were made by Southern conservative members. When I went through the Committee on Committees, there were more Eastern, Midwestern, and Northern representatives, so it was easier to line up support" (1/23/2013).

There are a variety of ways in which the leadership can punish non-conformists and withhold party rewards, but the institutional and personal clout of the member also matters for whether or not leaders ultimately do so. Similarly, the member's personal influence affects the value of the leadership's carrots. When asked whether the leadership ever offered him anything

for his vote, one of the most prominent moderates I interviewed said, “I had more than they had to give. It’s true, actually. The Speaker is the most powerful member of the House, but the Appropriations subcommittee chairs had the money. And I did have the Speaker ask me to help members who needed help politically, or they were promised help on a project. I did that, absolutely.” He acknowledged, “Ultimately the Speaker could say, ‘You’re not going to be subcommittee chairman anymore. You’re out; you’re in.’ He could have done that, but that would have been really really harsh” (1/23/2013).

It should be noted that not all members are concerned with advancing to leadership, at least not to the same degree. One of the moderate Democrats echoed the comments of her Republican counterparts, and she too believed that she did not play a role in leadership because of her unwillingness to vote in lockstep with the party. She continued, “But that wasn’t exactly what I was interested in” (1/22/2013). Similarly, a moderate Republican member who entered Congress at a later stage in life said, “I didn’t have any place to go; I wasn’t looking for a leadership position... I’d had my career in business. I wasn’t going for any brass ring. I didn’t want to be head of any committee; I didn’t want to be the Speaker of the House. I just wanted to do what I could for the district and for the country” (3/14/2013). However, policy and leadership goals are intertwined to some degree, and the higher the member moves up in the chamber, party, or committee, the more of an impact she can likely have on policy outcomes.

A Hostile Congressional Environment

In addition to this diminished policy impact and stature in the chamber, the interviews suggested that there was another factor that made their time in Congress increasingly difficult. The congressional environment itself was becoming more and more hostile, and the day-to-day

interactions between members reflected this shift toward what Theriault (2013) calls “partisan warfare.” In fact, the party rarely employs formal sanctions, and most of these altercations took place on the sidelines—in the elevators, at committee hearings, and during conference meetings, for example. As one moderate noted, “I never had any threats, but ridicule, yes” (3/14/2013). This is where the reported experiences of moderate Republicans and moderate Democrats differ the most. Most of the moderate Republicans gave specific accounts of the negative interactions they had with their more conservative colleagues. A long-time member recounted this story:

We had weekly party conference meetings. The leadership would go over the schedule for the week; the whip would say this is what we’re going to do. It’s sort of a cheerleading session, chin up the troops, keep them psyched up to follow the party line. Then they always have an open forum, and invariably it was people on the right who spoke at those. Occasionally a moderate would get up. I remember standing up there and advocating an increase in the minimum wage and I was booed. By my own conference (1/14/2013).

One high-level staffer described how the tension between moderates and ideologues surfaced in both formal and informal settings:

Just in terms of social relations, one Republican member who was a subcommittee chair tried to block [the Congressman] from getting something he needed for a military base in his district as retribution. We got leadership involved and eventually the guy yielded. There was another time a Republican member of Congress asked [the Congressman] in an elevator how he would react to some particular environmental thing. Our view was going to matter. He was a California member, so [the Congressman] said, “What does Henry Waxman [a liberal Democrat from California] think of it?” He didn’t say, “I will do whatever Waxman wants.” He just wanted to get a sense of how controversial thing this was. Probably wasn’t the most politic thing to say, but not outrageous. That member refused to talk to [the Congressman] for at least three months, maybe longer, because he had asked the view of a Democrat (1/22/2013).

Moderates told many stories of how their conservative colleagues took jabs at them. As one member explained, “I was in the elevator that you take up to the House floor, and a fellow [congressman] from Texas said, ‘So you’re a self-identified moderate, middle-of-the-road guy, right?’ I said yeah. He said, ‘There’s only two things in the middle of the road: yellow lines and dead skunks’” (2/28/2013). Another moderate recalled this exchange in a committee meeting: “There was a [freshman] representative who was holier than thou. He’d look at me with such disdain, like you’re part of the problem, you’re the reason they sent me here. This guy was implying that I was just a bleeding heart” (1/23/2013).

To be sure, for some members, these types of interactions did not seem to matter much. One moderate remarked, “At a Republican meeting, [the whip] ridiculed me as being soft. [He said,] ‘Is this the type of representative we want to have, who will not stand up for those things we all believe in?’ And he went on this way. There were some people who couldn’t stand that. But it didn’t bother me.” This particular member even went on to claim, “Serving in Congress was the most wonderful experience I’d ever had in my life” (3/14/2013).

One moderate Republican, however, suspected that other former moderates might be tempted to paint a rosier picture of the party than they should: “I think a lot of my colleagues want to imply that things are better than they are. Things are not good, not good at all for Republicans, and especially not good for moderates” (2/7/2013).⁷² This member gave a

⁷² Some of them even discussed how other moderates were treated, but it is difficult to decide which account to report. For example, one moderate described her own experiences as follows: “Some of [my co-partisans] genuinely liked me and respected what I was doing, but they were all nice to me. Nobody was ever nasty.” However, this member came up in another interview and was described as being shunned and ridiculed. Conversely, one member suggested that two of the other moderates I spoke with were not ridiculed, but they gave several examples of the negative interactions they had with conservative colleagues. In general, I have mostly opted to discuss the member’s own portrayal of events.

particularly disturbing account of how her colleagues helped to mount a primary challenge against her:

[A congressman] from California and several others, including [a prominent party leader], came up into my district when I was a sitting congresswoman to help a former congressman that they knew who was running against me in the primary. They helped him raise money to defeat me, and they brought the Club for Growth. I defeated them and the Club for Growth. The second time they came up, I went to [the leader] personally and said, “This has got to stop. I am a sitting congresswoman. You have no business coming into my district trying to defeat me. You may not agree with me, but helping my opponent raise money, that’s outrageous.”

This member then took the issue up at a conference meeting. She stood up in front of her colleagues and said, “I want to say that I am running for Congress. I sit with you here, and people in this conference are helping my opponents raise money.” The member continued, “[The leader] perked up and said this must not be done and so on. His last words were, ‘Well you may not agree with her politics, and she may be a moderate, but there ain’t nobody in this group that doesn’t like [her].’ Think about this; you are standing up in a crowd of more than 200 people. But I had to do that. I thought you should understand how difficult it is” (2/7/2013).

Most moderate Republicans agreed that this type of behavior came from fellow members rather than the party leadership. In the words of one member, “The party leaders are different. Every single person has a vote, and leaders need every single one to vote for you. It’s not so much top leadership. They know you need diversity within the conference, quite frankly” (1/23/2013). This is in part because their replacement would likely be worse for the party. The leaders knew “that if I wasn’t there, it would be a Democrat” (1/22/2013). Once a moderate was accused of not being conservative enough, and he reminded the leadership, “If you don’t have me, you’re going to get a Democrat, not a conservative Republican.” He then added, “They got a Democrat when I left” (1/14/2013).

In fact, members readily acknowledged Speaker Gingrich's efforts to keep the party more diverse. One member explained why: "Newt Gingrich, to his credit, recognized that without people like me, they're not the majority. There aren't enough people like him to win enough seats to give the Republicans the majority. He suffered our presence because he realized that without us, he's not the Speaker of the House" (2/28/2013). It was surprising how many moderates gave similar portrayals of Gingrich. In the words of another member, "Gingrich was smart enough to know that he needed moderates to get the majority and to be the leader... Selfishly, he was very pragmatic, and he worked with moderates" (1/23/2013). Even so, in the words of one moderate, while much of the bullying came from rank-and-file members, "the top leadership condoned it" (2/7/2013).

The importance of being in the majority was a prominent theme in most of these discussions, and majority status may play a role in the treatment of moderates as well, at least among the Democrats. One moderate Democrat who spent most, but not all, of his time in the minority remarked, "The ability to influence the outcome of legislation in the minority is effectively zero. It's not .001; it's zero. The real Holy Grail is to be the majority. And for good reason, most people want to affect outcomes. They want to be legislators, not orators." This Democrat speculated that the size of the caucus might matter for how different subgroups of the caucus are treated. "Part of it is when there are 265 Democrats, you can alienate a certain number of people. But when the number is smaller and you have more tension in terms of trying to retake the majority, you need everyone. You can't piss an individual person off at all." He added that it wouldn't even "make sense" to punish moderates because they are the most electorally vulnerable members (1/18/2013). It seems as if attitudes about the logic of such retribution may differ somewhat within the Democratic and Republican caucuses. Moreover,

while the degree of ridicule may vary depending on the size of the caucus, moderate Republicans reported negative interactions with fellow colleagues when their party was in both the majority and the minority.

How the Democrats Differ

The policy influence of moderate Democrats has diminished as well. The membership of the Blue Dog coalition is now down to 15, and they comprise a mere 8% percent of the Democratic caucus. While the Blue Dogs are able to gain occasional policy concessions, they have a much smaller influence on the agenda than their liberal co-partisans. Even so, the moderate Democrats I spoke with did not report the same type of treatment as their moderate Republican counterparts. For one, moderate Democrats were not denied party rewards to the same degree, particularly in terms of committee assignments. One member stated, “I just had to convince [the Steering Committee] that those were the committees that would benefit my constituents and that I had some understanding of and background in [the issues]. There was certainly no litmus test” (2/11/2013). Another member agreed, “I don’t feel I was discriminated against by the Democratic caucus in any shape, manner, or form. I was chosen to be on Energy and Commerce in 1994, which was a competitive process. And on Energy and Commerce, I was chosen to be a subcommittee ranking member pretty much continuously. There might have been people who felt discriminated against; I did not, period” (1/18/2013).

To be sure, the Democrat referenced above did believe she did not play a role in leadership because of her unwillingness to toe the party line. But many of the other moderate Democrats I interviewed had actually held high-level leadership positions. Most of them were not pressured by leaders or members to change their policy positions. In some cases, leaders even preemptively excused moderates from voting with the party. One former member recalled,

“I had any number of people in the leadership tell me, ‘Don’t worry if you have to [vote against the party] because of your district. Do what you have to do.’ I never had anybody put pressure on me to vote one way or the other. Never” (2/11/2013).

Democratic leaders would ask moderates to support the party’s agenda, but there seemed to be few repercussions for not voting with the party. As one moderate Democrat said,

I never felt any pressure in the Democratic caucus. Tip O’Neill would come to me on an issue and say, “Can you help me on this?” I would say, “Mr. Speaker, I can not help you on this.” That was the end of the conversation, no pressure. I could vote my conscience and my district without feeling undue pressure, and that happened to me a number of times under [Speakers] Tip O’Neill, Jim Wright, and Tom Foley. Many times they asked me, and they took my answer as my final decision. I never received any threats about my chairmanship, unlike what my colleagues in the Republican conference experienced (1/25/2013).

In addition, they did not express similarly negative interactions with fellow members. One member stated simply, “I never was ridiculed. [Your colleagues] knew you have to go where your persuasion is” (2/11/2013). Another moderate Democrat agreed, “I didn’t think there were any obstacles because of my ideology.” He elaborated, “There was clearly a debate going on [in the party], but I don’t think anyone took it personally in any negative way. It’s not life and death. There will be another day; there will be another issue. You’re going to be friends with people on the opposite side of that particular issue... People have respect for other members. It’s not a little deal that people get elected” (1/18/2013).

The Democratic Party did have its own internal divisions, however, and this same member described some of the discussions that were happening within the party. He told a story about the events that unfolded within the Democratic caucus following the 1994 elections:

I can remember it like it's today. The Democratic caucus was meeting in the Ways and Means committee room. There were 250 odd Democrats in the Congress that ended. It was unprecedented how many people lost in the 1994 cycle. It was one of these group therapy sessions. The purpose was [to talk about] what happened and what we were going to do. Everyone had a few minutes to talk. The room was full. It lasted for hours, four or five hours. Maybe one hundred people spoke, and with heart-wrenching intensity. I remember thinking to myself that this was an absolutely incredible meeting. Of the people there, the clear majority of those who spoke attributed our losses to us not being liberal enough. I was thinking to myself that in the United States of America, there were probably two hundred people that thought the reason the Democrats lost was because we were not liberal enough. Of those two hundred people, one hundred were members of Congress in that room (1/18/2013).

It is difficult to believe that moderate Democrats were never pressured to support the party line, and indeed, this is likely not the case given that moderate Republicans as well as moderate Democrats became more loyal to the party over this time period (Roberts and Smith 2003). And we should be cautious of making generalizations given the small sample size. But it is plausible that the degree of the pressure differed between the parties, perhaps in part due to variation in the heterogeneity of the two parties. It may also be a reflection of differences in party leadership and party rhetoric. Many of the members, Republican and Democrat alike, explained how Newt Gingrich worked to change the tenor of the GOP, and it is not clear that the Democrats had a similar type of leader in their caucus. According to one moderate Republican, "Everyone was an enemy, as far as Gingrich was concerned. [Gingrich] thought he had to be on the biting edge all the time in order to keep his power. What he said and what he supported had to be antagonistic" (3/14/2013). The comments made by many of these moderate Republicans suggest that this attitude was pervasive in a variety of interactions between members. Nevertheless, despite the fact that moderate Democrats did not report the same kinds of negative experiences, given that they were also more likely to retire during this time suggests that they too felt that the benefits of remaining in Congress did not exceed the costs.

Prevalence of Additional Gender Effects

There are two main issues to take up with respect to the interaction between ideology and gender. The first concerns whether moderate Republican women were treated differently than moderate Republican men. This is an important theoretical consideration because it is possible that, in addition to their ideology, being a woman is a factor that shapes members' ability to achieve their goals. I spoke with one former Republican member at length about the experiences that women had in the Republican Party. She offered a counterargument to the gender-neutral ideological story that is being told here and suggested that it was even harder for moderate Republican women than it was for moderate Republican men during this time. She reported how one of her moderate female colleagues was treated and described a "doubly bound" position of moderate Republican women:

[A handful of members in the Gingrich circle] shunned her. That poor woman was put through hell. [She] was voting for some of the Democrat legislation, and it pissed that crowd off. They started making these nasty remarks about her. She'd come on the floor, and they'd turn and make a crack about her and laugh about her. It was bad; it was really bad. I couldn't think about what she could possibly do. I defended her, but I did it very quietly. I picked those guys out and talked with them and said, "Look, you've got to vote your district. That's what she's doing." They didn't care. She was voting moderate, and oh my god, that was a terrible thing.

Finally, she took matters into her own hands. It took such great courage. She stood in front of the conference and said, "I'd like to know what's going on." She clearly was hurt and her voice was shaking. "I'm feeling as though this entire conference has turned against me. But what I am doing is representing my people. What's going on?" And then she sat down. All of these people who had been putting heavy pressure on her to lockstep with [the leaders], looked at each other, and then [one of them] said, "Oh now, come on." [The whip] made some sort of a light apology. [The Speaker] made a much stronger apology and said, "Look we all have to vote our districts. She's right. Quit whatever you're doing. Stop it." But [this member] had to live through that because she was a moderate. I think it was different because she was a woman. They wouldn't have done that to a man. You have no idea how much harder it is to be a woman in the Republican Party in the House of Representatives than it is to be a man (2/7/2013).

To be sure, this is a compelling account of how it may have been additionally difficult to be a moderate woman in the Republican Party. There are, however, two reasons why we should be cautious of drawing this general of a conclusion. First, the member who was recounting this story said this same crowd of conservatives accepted her, but she was also a moderate Republican woman. Second, and more to the point, the moderate Republican men told similar stories about the ridicule they endured from their colleagues, and their accounts do not suggest that they felt “less shunned” than the moderate women.⁷³

The second and related issue is whether all Republican women were treated differently than their male counterparts. This is important because it is possible that, apart from ideology, being a woman matters for members’ ability to achieve their goals. Indeed, the GOP “War on Women” is often referenced in the media, and if there were a conventional wisdom for why there are so few Republican women in office, the “sexist Republican Party” narrative would probably win out. Though, it seems that conservative Republican women and moderate women were regarded differently within the party. This member said, “The conservative women were not treated poorly. The moderate women were given no power, zero.” There was also ideological variation in the distribution of party rewards. For example, when this moderate member wanted to get on a committee, the chairman told her, “I’m not going to have any goddamn, Northeast moderate, pro-choice woman on my committee.” She continued, “He made that crack and did not appoint a woman. For four years, there was not one Republican woman on his committee. When he appointed a woman, it was a hardcore conservative woman” (2/7/2013).

⁷³ There is a third reason that was addressed above. The member who is being discussed in this account described her own experiences in the party somewhat differently. The member referenced the fact that it was oftentimes trying to be a moderate, but she also said, “[My colleagues] were all nice to me. Nobody was ever nasty” (1/22/2013). I included this account here because it provides a counterargument to my own, but in general, I was reluctant to use any information that was not provided by the individual herself.

In short, it is tempting to attribute the partisan disparity in women's representation to sexism in the GOP, and it is possible that moderate Republican women did have the seriously short end of the stick during this time. However, a closer look at the interview data cautions us from making such sweeping conclusions. Moreover, the quantitative results in the previous chapters support the argument that ideology, rather than gender, is the driving force behind the persistent underrepresentation of Republican women in Congress.

Maybe I Should Go, Too

One moderate Republican described the day he informed his moderate colleagues of his decision to retire from the House of Representatives: "I'll never forget the day that I announced [my retirement] in Ohio. I came back [to Washington], and I would always sit in this certain section of the House. It's like a school cafeteria; you sit in the same place, with people that are ideologically aligned with you. The [conversation] wasn't so much, 'We're sorry to see you go,' but it was like, 'Maybe I should go, or maybe I should go, or maybe I should go'" (2/28/2013).

A high-level congressional staffer gave a rich description of why these recent partisan shifts might be especially hard for those in the ideological middle: "You're seeing the party drift further and further in a direction that is finally just anathema to you. This is a very human game—the kinds of people you're hanging around with, the way they approach the world, the way they see issues, and the way they see colleagues on the other side of the aisle. It's like being an immigrant in a foreign land that you didn't choose to move to. Why do that? And if you're senior, [you think,] 'I've already done my bit. I can do more from the outside'" (1/22/2013).

A veteran moderate stated that the changing nature of the atmosphere in Congress "weighed heavily" in his decision to retire, and another said the shifting of the Republican Party

had “a lot to do with” his (1/14/2013; 2/28/2013). For most members, there are a variety of factors that influence the decision to leave office, such as age, health, term limits on chairmanships, the shift to minority status, an uphill electoral battle, rising campaign costs, and of course, the desire to spend more time with their family. Yet many of these moderates, particularly moderate Republicans, spoke at length about how the job itself became “frustrating,” “unsatisfying,” and “increasingly confrontational” (1/14/2013; 1/25/2013). A moderate Democrat who retired added that it was “no longer as much fun” (1/25/2013). One Republican groaned, “Everything was a fight,” and likened his experiences to “those clown things you punch” (1/22/2013). These day-to-day struggles did wear on members: “Every day going in and being the odd man out... It’s grueling; it’s exhausting; it’s corrosive” (1/22/2013).

Electoral vulnerability was a consideration for some of those who retired, but most were confident they would have won re-election. One member commented, “[Losing] wasn’t a consideration really. I’ve never lost an election, and I was pretty sure I’d win the next one” (1/23/2013). Many of these members had represented their districts for more than a decade, in some cases two or more, and such assessments are logical given the sizeable incumbency advantage in American politics. Nevertheless, retiring members tend to downplay their chances of losing, especially in public, so it is difficult to ascertain how large this loomed in their decision to retire. Even so, the distinction between running and retiring can be murkier than one might expect. One member described the trajectory of a fellow colleague: [The member’s] district rolled over from being a moderate Republican district to a strong Democrat district. She held it as long as she could, and she was not going to run. The White House cut a deal with her to run, and if she lost they would give her a post somewhere, which they did” (2/7/2013). In short, it is impossible to know whether those who retired would have lost if they had run, and it

is also difficult to say whether those who ran and lost actually wanted to retire but were compelled to seek re-election for whatever reason.

A handful of members differentiated between how the widespread retirement of moderates has implications for Congress or their party and how the individual decision to retire affects the member's own quality of life: "[Another member who retired] and I are both making over a million bucks a year. It's a nice life now. I'm going to the ball game today... I got to take my puppies on a walk. It's a whole different way of looking at things" (4/1/2013). Another member agreed, "For me, I'm happier than I've been in years. My schedule's better, I'm making more money, I don't have anybody yelling and screaming at me all the time." But, he added, "I'm sad for the institution... When you see Olympia Snowe [leaving], that's a big loss to the institution" (2/28/2013). Another member also referenced Snowe's recent retirement from the Senate: "I'm sorry for the party, and I'm sorry for the number of women that we have. But I thought she was smart [to retire]. She felt, 'Where am I going, what more can I do?' I think her timing was pretty good" (1/22/2013).

Most of the moderate Republicans described the congressional environment as "steadily deteriorating," but it is probably the case that not all of them saw it this way (1/14/2013). As one high-level staffer commented, "Some people get a charge out of being a martyr, always swimming upstream, being a maverick. For some people, that's all they need" (1/22/2013). For example, one former moderate senator said he enjoyed going against the pack, but then he laughed and said that in the end he got his membership revoked. The House staffer above noted that the member he worked for relished his role to some degree but that he ultimately "got tired of it" (3/8/2013). Features of the institutions are also likely to matter, and the House "is not an institution that rewards or is designed to reward maverick behavior" (1/22/2013). Indeed, I did

not speak with a single moderate representative on either side that seemed eager to go into the fray each time, and the fact that moderate Republicans and Democrats became increasingly loyal to the party as time went on suggests that bucking the party was not the most preferred strategy (Roberts and Smith 2003).

The Best Seat in the House

This depiction of moderates is, however, puzzling in some ways. Moderates occupy the coveted space in the ideological center, and we might expect them to be more likely to influence policy and more likely to receive party rewards. Indeed, prominent theories of legislative organization suggest that policy outcomes should reflect the preferences of the median member of the chamber (e.g., Krehbiel 1991, 1993). At the very least, and even for those who think parties are the real agenda-setters, we might expect moderates to flex their muscles to a greater degree than they have in recent years.

A former Republican senator described how the institutional environment was especially favorable for moderates when he was first elected: “With a 50-50 Senate, we [five moderate Republican Senators] were the swing votes. If we vote for the Democrats, the Democrats win; if we vote for the Republicans, the Republicans win. This was our moment in history. We could’ve been the most powerful five people in the country because of a fluke of numbers, going from utterly powerless to ultimate power. Nothing passes without our agreeing to it. Come see us on every piece of legislation; we’ll decide if it passes. We missed our opportunity.”

I asked the senator why he thought that happened. “That’s the million-dollar question. For some reason, we couldn’t band together on the key vote of the first Bush presidency, which was the tax cuts, the huge tax cuts. [Vice-President] Cheney got on [the moderates]. They

peeled away [and supported the party].” More generally, the former moderate senator attributed this party loyalty to the party’s control of rewards but also to, “frankly, lack of backbone. [Members think,] ‘I don’t want to buck 45 other people in the party. I want to go along and get along.’ They are always looking to their re-election and calculating what’s in their best interest. You don’t want to get kicked out of the club. You’re going to need the party behind you when you run for re-election. There’s peer pressure. It’s a mix.” With respect to whether he tried to influence his moderate colleagues, the senator continued, “Another factor was that seniority is so important in the Senate. I’m sitting at a table of five. [One member] had been there since 1980; I was five years out of college when he was elected to the Senate. I’m the little guy by seniority. An idea coming from the most junior person almost is an insult.” But, he reflected, “My biggest disappointment during my time in Congress was that we didn’t exercise our power” (3/8/2013).

So why didn’t they? A moderate Republican representative said, “Moderates tend to be pleasant, genteel people. There was a reluctance to stand up and get in their face when we were being marginalized. And like any relationship where you continually are on the short end of the stick, unless the person getting the bad end of the deal speaks up for himself, you’re going to embolden the person to continue to give you the short end of the stick” (2/28/2013). This was perhaps in part a reflection of their numbers as well. Of the two moderate Republicans that were able to move up in leadership, they were cautious in terms of how much they dissented from the party. One, for example, chose not to criticize the party in public: “I knew that was a compromise I had to make in order to advance” (1/23/2013). The other said, “I learned to just keep quiet unless I was asked where are the moderates going. There were several of us who were moderates who were whips. But we all learned to keep quiet unless we were asked”

(2/7/2013). These decisions were strategic, of course, because they knew the party could ultimately revoke their positions at any time.

This is not to say that moderates never pushed back. One Republican told a story about a current congressman who was initially denied a subcommittee chairmanship, and “the only way [he eventually got it] was by threatening to be a pain in the ass for two years” (2/28/2013). Moreover, as the abortion example from above indicated, moderates were willing to withhold their votes and demand policy concessions on some issues. But in general, they seemed to use a different set of tactics than their more ideologically extreme counterparts. This was likely due to a multitude of factors, including their diminishing numbers, the potential denial of party rewards, and an alternative approach to policymaking that emphasized negotiation and compromise. It is nevertheless tempting to wonder how the congressional environment might be different today had moderates stepped out from behind the scenes and caused a public stir as well.

Summary

The ideological moderates of yesterday have all but vanished from congressional office, but as one member sighed, “That’s really what we need more of” (1/22/2013). All of the moderates I spoke with lamented these recent partisan shifts: “I hate to see [the moderates] go, because it just creates more tension. There’s nobody to bridge the gap, there’s nobody to go to both sides and say, ‘Let’s just get a solution here. Why don’t you give up on this a little bit, and these guys will give up on this a little bit, and we’ll work things out’” (2/11/2013).

However, for the moderates who ultimately decided to pack it in, it is easy to see why. The congressional climate was becoming more and more hostile, and it was increasingly difficult for moderates to achieve their goals in the chamber. The former moderates that I spoke with,

particularly moderate Republicans, described how their policy impact diminished, how they were denied party rewards, and how they were ridiculed by their fellow co-partisans. The ideological tension between moderates and ideologues surfaced in a variety of formal and informal interactions, but one moderate Republican summed it up like this: “There are a lot of indignities thrust upon middle-of-the-road people” (2/28/2013). The Democrats that I interviewed did not express the same type of pressure or negative treatment from their colleagues, but their ability to influence policy outcomes was also affected as their numbers waned. The fact that moderate Republicans and moderate Democrats were more likely to retire from the U.S. House during this time suggests that the rewards of serving in Congress have seriously changed.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Implications

This dissertation addressed three questions that lie at the heart of American politics. First, why does partisan polarization continue to persist in Congress? Second, why do some individuals run for political office and others do not? And third, why has the number of Democratic women in Congress increased steadily since the 1980s while the number of Republican women has barely grown? The theoretical argument developed here, and more specifically, the introduction of the concept of party fit, seeks to shed light on all of them. Each one constitutes an area of study in its own right, and all three could have been (and actually have been) the single topic of analysis. However, one of the strengths of the party fit argument is that it unites these largely divorced fields under a common theoretical framework. It forces us to think about how the same micro-level political processes have implications for a host of seemingly unrelated questions. That, in turn, allows us to make connections across the political world and to see the many ways in which broader political forces intersect and interact.

Ideology, Candidate Emergence, and Partisan Polarization

The empirical analyses in Chapters 3 and 4 tested the party fit hypothesis on individuals who are well situated to run for Congress. I relied on both survey and behavioral data to examine how ideological variation across state legislators shaped their perceptions of a congressional career and their decision to run for Congress. I demonstrated that liberal Republican and conservative Democratic state legislators are less likely to run for Congress than those at the ideological poles, and that this disparity is especially pronounced among Republicans. The findings contribute to the polarization literature by offering a candidate self-selection mechanism for the persistence of partisan polarization and the rise in asymmetric

polarization. The decline of moderates in Congress has largely been discussed in terms of member attrition and procedures internal to Congress. Yet, as Bonica (2013b) writes, “The more relevant question is why a new generation of moderates never arrived in Congress to replenish their ranks.” Indeed, we know that the rise in polarization has been fueled by member replacement, but we know little about the changing ideological makeup of the candidate pool. While journalists and pundits are eager to claim that gerrymandering and party primaries are the causes of polarization, the direct evidence to support this claim has been lacking (e.g., Hirano et al. 2010; McCarty et al. 2009; McGhee et al. 2013). My dissertation instead turns the attention to the types of candidates who run for Congress, or the choices that voters are given when they go to the polls.

Fiorina et al. (2006) introduced this idea nearly a decade ago, though they did not fully explore it empirically. To be sure, Fiorina et al. (2006) are concerned with a different question—whether the American public is polarized—and they use this hypothetical scenario to illustrate how we could have a polarized Congress but not have a polarized electorate. They suggest that if the only candidates who run for office come from the ideological extremes, the only candidates who will be elected to office will therefore come from the extremes. Put in somewhat different terms, if moderates do not run for office, the question of whether the public is polarized (or even the question of whether party activists are polarized, which is Fiorina et al.’s conclusion) is of secondary importance. Yet, it is especially crucial to understand the mechanisms behind polarization given that different types of policy solutions are being proposed and enacted in an attempt to minimize polarization. For example, initiatives aimed at hiring third parties to draw congressional districts and those seeking to change the type of primary system might not be a cure all, or even a partial solution, for achieving this end.

If we approach the “how” of polarization by instead asking why moderates do not run for Congress, this shifts the theoretical framework to the candidate level. We are then compelled to consider the costs and benefits of seeking elective office. Scholars have largely overlooked how candidate ideology and ideological conformity with the party delegation matter for political ambition and the decision to run for office, and leading theories of candidate emergence rarely consider how the ideological environment can affect the calculus of candidacy or how the incentives to seek elective office can vary depending on a candidate’s ideological stripes. Yet, as the analyses here have demonstrated, a candidate’s compatibility with the party delegation has important implications for whether launching a congressional bid is worth it.

The analyses in Chapters 5 and 6 explored the issue of candidate emergence from the perspective of incumbent members of Congress and the decision to run for re-election. The results echo those in the previous chapters and lend additional support to the party fit hypothesis. I found that liberal Republican and conservative Democratic members are more likely to retire from congressional office than members at the ideological poles. The qualitative data in Chapter 6 shed light on the kinds of experiences that moderate MCs had during this time and the various factors that influenced the decision to retire from congressional office. In terms of the party fit framework, I discussed how the rise in partisan polarization and the shifting size, influence, and makeup of the moderate coalitions had important effects on members’ ability to affect policy outcomes and obtain an influential position in the chamber. There are significant costs associated with running for re-election and serving in office; for moderate MCs who were no longer able to accomplish their goals, the benefits simply ceased to outweigh the costs.

These many, many individual decisions to run for and remain in office have had a profound impact on the ideological makeup of the institution as a whole. When certain subsets

of the candidate pool are more or less likely to launch a candidacy or remain in office, this has macro-level implications for legislative representation. In other words, these candidate self-selection patterns are the micro-processes that underlie the “partisan warfare” that currently pervades Congress (Theriault 2013). Potential and actual candidates may be more likely to value holding office at some points and less so at others, and in fact, most of the ideological moderates I spoke with were glad they had served in office in the 1980s and 1990s but were relieved to not be in Congress today. These over-time changes in the incentives to run for office matter for the ideological composition of the congressional chamber.

The Good and The Bad for American Democracy

The normative implications of these candidate self-selection processes are both positive and negative. In some ways, this is a story of institutional maintenance, persistence, and order. The fact that ideological outsiders are more discouraged from running for office than ideological conformists offers an additional explanation for why party institutions remain relatively stable, at least in the American context. Party delegations may change more or less depending on the election year or the particular electoral environment, and they may change in the long run due to retirement patterns and gradual shifts in party ideology over time. But parties stay the same more often than they change, and dramatic disruptions in party ideology are less common than ideological continuity. Such differential patterns of candidate self-selection offer an additional mechanism for how this institutional persistence and long-term stability occurs. This is in general a good thing. Many, perhaps most, political scientists would advocate for strong and durable political parties (e.g., APSA 1950). Indeed, we might invoke Schattschneider (1942) or Aldrich (1995) here and note that democracy is either “unthinkable” or “unworkable” save in

terms of the parties. The shared presumption is that the viability of political parties is important for the health of a democracy.

However, there is also a darker side to the party fit story told here. Such patterns of candidate entry can lead to a party getting lost in the representational weeds. The increase in partisan polarization in Congress has inspired ample academic and popular debate about whether either party is representative of the American public. Indeed, while it has long been assumed that candidates will emerge from and be representative of the ideological center, this is a far cry from the current reality of electoral politics in the United States. Ideological moderates—the misfits in the current political environment—are increasingly opting out of congressional contests, and this has consequences for the substance of policy outcomes as well as the quality of democratic deliberation and legislative representation.

What is perhaps most important is that the American public is not satisfied with the representation they are receiving in Washington. In November 2013, levels of congressional approval hit an all-time low of 9% (Newport 2013d). Gallup polls from January 2014 show that this figure has increased only slightly to 13% (Jones 2014). To be sure, miserable congressional approval ratings are more the norm than the exception, and Fenno (1975) observed long ago that Americans hate Congress but love their congressperson. But what is notable is that recent approval figures are well below the historical average. Gallup first measured the job approval of Congress in 1974, and levels of congressional approval have averaged 33% during this time. In other words, the historical average is more than double that of 2013 congressional approval ratings, and in fact, the 2013 average of 14% approval was the lowest in Gallup's 39-year history of the measure (Newport 2013d).

It is no wonder that congressional approval is so low. A study from the Pew Research Center found that the current 113th Congress has been one of the least productive in history (Desilver 2013). Members of Congress have delayed action on a range of pressing policy matters such as gun control, climate change, immigration reform, and education policy. What is central to broader questions of representation, though, is the fact that the public wants Congress to address these issues. For example, a recent Gallup poll showed that 55% of Americans are dissatisfied with U.S. gun laws and policies (Rifkin 2014). This figure includes those who want stricter as well as more lenient gun laws, but the point is that policymakers have for the most part resisted legislative action, and discussions about gun laws have vanished from the policy agenda. Similarly, nearly half of Americans say the government is doing too little to protect the environment (Newport 2013a). And a majority of Americans, Republicans and Democrats alike, would support a variety of immigration reform proposals, including a multifaceted pathway to citizenship as well as increased border security (Newport and Wilke 2013).

The rise in partisan polarization has consequences not only for the types of policies that emerge on legislative agenda, but for the design and implementation of these policies as well. Mettler (2011) notes that, in the current legislative environment, public policies that disguise or subvert the government's role have proven easier to enact than other policies because they face fewer institutional obstacles. The hurdles involved in enacting new tax breaks, for example, are lower than those associated with direct new spending programs (Howard 1997). The ways in which public policies are delivered have important effects for perceptions of government, levels of political engagement, and the quality of democratic citizenship (Campbell 2002; Mettler 1998, 2005, 2011; Mettler and Soss 2004; Soss 1999). Policies such as the G.I. Bill, which are highly visible and universalistic, can stimulate political participation and promote a sense of political

efficacy among its recipients (Mettler 2005), while those that are hidden from the public's view perpetuate the false notion that government is divorced from the lives of the citizenry (Mettler 2011). The main point is that public policies have profound effects on civic life. These sharp partisan divisions coupled with the combative style of congressional policymaking have created a gulf between the government and the public, in part because of the features of contemporary public policies.

To be sure, the election of ideological moderates or centrists is not a sure-fire solution to the problems that pervade Congress today. An increase in the number of moderates, or a decrease in the number of ideologues, will not necessarily enhance the quality of representation. Nor will moderates, or any member for that matter, pass policies that always reflect the will of "the people," particularly in cases where preferences differ across groups (Enns and Wlezien 2011). However, the presence of ideological moderates would almost certainly expand the scope of the policy agenda and change the nature of legislative debate, especially in the contemporary Congress. It is difficult to imagine how some of these issues would even emerge on the legislative agenda given the continued push toward the ideological extremes. For example, following the 2010 elections, 86% of the newly elected Republicans were opposed to any climate change legislation that increased government revenue and 91% of them swore to never allow an income tax increase on any individual or business, regardless of deficits or war (Keyes 2010).

The broader message is that the paralysis and dysfunction in Washington is due to the rule of ideological hardliners and the ruin of ideological centrists. And the public doesn't want this, either. By 53% to 25%, Americans say it is more important for political leaders to compromise rather than stick to their beliefs (Newport 2013b). The real irony is that low congressional approval ratings stem from this inability and unwillingness to compromise. A

2013 Gallup poll shows that the leading reason Americans give for their disapproval of Congress is the failure of leaders to find agreement on issues, and an amazing 59% of Americans cite partisan gridlock, partisan bickering, and congressional inaction as the primary criticism they have regarding the legislative body (Saad 2013). What remains unclear, though, is how Congress and the nation will get out of this situation. The findings here suggest that we must take the issue of candidate emergence seriously if the partisan warfare in Congress is going to diminish anytime soon.

The Intersection of Ideology and Gender

Coming full circle, we return to the question of how differential patterns of candidate emergence matter for the representation of particular groups. If potential and actual candidates who belong to a specific group are more likely to be clustered in one portion of the ideological distribution, they may, individually, be more or less inclined to run for and remain in office than those who do not belong to that group. And collectively, their level of representation may be lower or higher than it would be if the group members were more evenly ideologically dispersed. In this case, Republican women are the group that is disproportionately affected by the changing political environment. Again, there is a dearth of conservative women in state legislative office, so the probability that a “Republican type” will both be in the congressional pipeline and be a woman is low. In addition, Republican women in Congress in the 1980s and 1990s were more likely to be in the moderate wing of the party, and rightward shifts in the party resulted in the large turnover of women in the GOP caucus. These patterns help to account for the growing partisan disparity in female representation and the stagnation in the overall number of women in Congress.

The partisan imbalance of women in Congress has serious consequences for both the types of public policies that are pursued in the legislative sphere as well as the representation of historically marginalized groups in the policymaking process. In terms of policy outcomes, Swers (2002) finds that gender plays a significant role not only in determining how legislators vote on women's issues, but also in shaping the extent to which legislators participate in various stages of the legislative process, such as sponsoring bills, drafting amendments, and speaking on the floor (see also Dodson 2006). In addition, women define the legislative agenda and frame policy issues in different ways than their male colleagues (Wolbrecht 2002). For example, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson (R-CT) worked to frame childcare policy and child support enforcement as an effort to promote the independence of poor women (Hawkesworth et al. 2001, 47). These findings suggest that as more women hold office, policy will better represent women's interests, and new issues will emerge on the legislative agenda.

Yet the implications of the partisan gap extend well beyond policymaking. While women of all ideological stripes are members of a historically disadvantaged group in American politics, there are crucial differences between these women that must be taken into account (Schreiber 2014). In fact, Elder (2008, 4) claims, "The more important measure of women's power is arguably their representation within their respective party delegations." Republican women in Congress have policy priorities and concerns that differ from both Democratic women and Republican men (Burrell 1994; Swers and Larson 2005), but they lack the numerical strength to influence their party's policy direction (Elder 2008). If women are excluded from one of the two major parties in American politics, this seriously constrains the influence that women can have in Congress. At a theoretical, empirical, and normative level, there is reason to be concerned about

the laggard status of Republican women, particularly in light of the advancements made by women in the Democratic Party.

Looking Toward the Future

The forecast of this dissertation is not overly bright for those who yearn for compromise, bipartisanship, and comity in Washington. It will likely take an unexpected shock to the political environment and many election cycles for the parties to shift from their current course. What is optimistic, though, is that the results increase our understanding of how, specifically, polarization is intensifying with nearly each election year. And it is crucial that we identify the correct mechanisms that are responsible for changes in congressional polarization. Only then, when we have pinpointed the actual reasons for why the number of moderates in Congress has declined can we begin to address and counteract the movement by both parties, and particularly the Republican Party, toward the ideological poles.

One lesson suggested here is that those who bemoan partisan polarization in Congress should focus on recruiting and supporting ideologically moderate candidates, rather than changing primary rules or re-drawing district boundaries. Some political elites are already doing this. For example, the Republican Main Street Partnership is an organization that, according to its website, “supports Republican candidates who are committed to governing and making Washington work again.” The organization launched a fundraising arm last year to fight Tea Party influence, and they have helped Republican incumbents fend off Tea Party challengers. Unlike conservative groups such as the Club for Growth, the organization has not spent money to challenge a sitting member of Congress (Cornwell 2014). However, the defeat of ideologues in

Congress, combined with the recruitment of moderates in the congressional pipeline and the support of moderate incumbents, seems like a potentially promising recipe.

But the main lesson is that the “partisan warfare” in Congress is not going anywhere, at least in the short run, unless political elites and the American citizenry do something to end it. This “take no prisoners” mode of political competition has a negative effect on the nature of policy outcomes, the scope of legislative debate, and the quality of representative democracy. I do not seek to glorify the character of ideological moderates, and to be sure, many of the “moderate” Southern Democrats that reigned in the mid-20th century espoused morally reprehensible beliefs. But I do seek to advocate for the renewal of a middle ground in American politics. This is far from controversial, and many Americans, probably most, share this view. One of the moderate Republicans I interviewed said she hopes that, “like the Phoenix, the moderates will rise from the ashes” (1/22/2013). I second this statement, but I also believe that moderates aren’t going to rise on their own.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Supporting Information for Chapter 3

Appendix A.1: Summary Statistics (Republican State Legislators)

| | Mean | Median | SD | Range |
|---|-------|--------|------|---------------|
| <i>Table 3.1</i> | | | | |
| DV: Chance of Winning | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.32 | [0.01, 0.99] |
| DV: Value of House Seat | 0.07 | 0 | 2.94 | [-10, 9] |
| Self-Reported Ideology | 2.35 | 2 | 0.80 | [1, 5] |
| District Partisanship | 0.60 | 1 | 0.49 | [0, 1] |
| Raise Money | 5.15 | 5 | 1.24 | [1, 7] |
| Contacted by Party | 0.23 | 0 | 0.62 | [0, 4] |
| Terms in State Legislature | 2.37 | 2 | 1.05 | [1, 4] |
| Professional Legislature | 2.71 | 3 | 1.40 | [1, 5] |
| Incumbent Strength | 5.82 | 6 | 1.15 | [1, 7] |
| Support from Groups | 5.21 | 5 | 1.26 | [1, 7] |
| Female | 0.14 | 0 | 0.34 | [0, 1] |
| Age | 3.91 | 4 | 1.33 | [1, 6] |
| <i>Table 3.2</i> | | | | |
| DV: Run for Congress | 0.02 | 0 | 0.14 | [0, 1] |
| State Legislator Ideology (Moderate) | -0.68 | -0.72 | 0.37 | [-1.96, 1.47] |
| Incumbent Running in District | 0.89 | 1 | 0.32 | [0, 1] |
| Congressional District Ideology | 0.11 | 0.15 | 0.20 | [-0.89, 0.49] |
| Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 10.78 | 10.81 | 1.32 | [3.26, 15.04] |
| Times Run for State Legislature | 3.37 | 3 | 1.60 | [1, 10] |
| Female | 0.17 | 0 | 0.38 | [0, 1] |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 0.19 | 0.17 | 0.11 | [0.03, 0.63] |
| In State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.25 | 0 | 0.43 | [0, 1] |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.42 | 0.38 | 0.41 | [0, 1] |
| Extreme Ideologue | 0.01 | 0 | 0.07 | [0, 1] |

Note: In Table 3.1, all non-dummy predictor variables were standardized to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

Appendix A.1: Summary Statistics (Democratic State Legislators)

| | Mean | Median | SD | Range |
|---|-------|--------|------|---------------|
| <i>Table 3.1</i> | | | | |
| DV: Chance of Winning | 0.51 | 0.50 | 0.30 | [0.01, 0.99] |
| DV: Value of House Seat | -0.90 | -1 | 3.15 | [-12, 9] |
| Self-Reported Ideology | 3.56 | 4 | 1.34 | [1, 6] |
| District Partisanship | 0.64 | 1 | 0.48 | [0, 1] |
| Raise Money | 4.94 | 5 | 1.35 | [1, 7] |
| Contacted by Party | 0.32 | 0 | 0.74 | [0, 4] |
| Terms in State Legislature | 2.55 | 3 | 1.17 | [1, 4] |
| Professional Legislature | 2.60 | 2 | 1.34 | [1, 5] |
| Incumbent Strength | 5.60 | 6 | 1.32 | [1, 7] |
| Support from Groups | 5.17 | 5 | 1.38 | [1, 7] |
| Female | 0.29 | 0 | 0.45 | [0, 1] |
| Age | 3.70 | 4 | 1.21 | [1, 6] |
| <i>Table 3.2</i> | | | | |
| DV: Run for Congress | 0.01 | 0 | 0.11 | [0, 1] |
| State Legislator Ideology (Moderate) | -0.43 | -0.48 | 0.53 | [-1.91, 1.94] |
| Incumbent Running in District | 0.90 | 1 | 0.30 | [0, 1] |
| Congressional District Ideology | -0.09 | -0.07 | 0.29 | [-1.09, 0.49] |
| Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 10.78 | 10.81 | 1.28 | [5.23, 15.45] |
| Times Run for State Legislature | 3.44 | 3 | 1.67 | [1, 11] |
| Female | 0.28 | 0 | 0.45 | [0, 1] |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 0.21 | 0.17 | 0.12 | [0.03, 0.63] |
| In State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.21 | 0 | 0.41 | [0, 1] |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.63 | 0.75 | 0.40 | [0, 1] |
| Extreme Ideologue | 0.01 | 0 | 0.11 | [0, 1] |

Note: In Table 3.1, all non-dummy predictor variables were standardized to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

Appendix A.2: Alternative Specification of Legislator Ideology (Table 3.1)

The Determinants of State Legislators' Perceived Ability to Achieve their Electoral and Policy Goals, By Party (With Policy Positions)

| | Republican State Legislators | | Democratic State Legislators | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| | Chance of Winning Primary | Value of House Seat | Chance of Winning Primary | Value of House Seat |
| Policy Positions (Higher=Non-Conformist) | -0.04* (0.02) | -0.39* (0.19) | -0.01 (0.02) | -0.01 (0.20) |
| Favorable District Partisanship | -0.08* (0.04) | -0.24 (0.40) | -0.07* (0.03) | 0.31 (0.40) |
| Ability to Raise Money | 0.05* (0.02) | -0.08 (0.21) | 0.02 (0.02) | -0.34† (0.21) |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.05** (0.02) | 0.09 (0.19) | 0.06** (0.02) | -0.05 (0.20) |
| Terms in State Legislative Office | -0.01 (0.02) | -0.22 (0.20) | -0.01 (0.02) | -0.36† (0.21) |
| Serves in Professional State Legislature | 0.05** (0.02) | -0.20 (0.20) | 0.05** (0.02) | -0.26 (0.19) |
| Incumbent Strength | -0.01 (0.02) | 0.20 (0.20) | -0.05** (0.02) | 0.22 (0.20) |
| Support from Outside Groups | 0.05** (0.02) | 0.16 (0.22) | 0.01 (0.02) | 0.29 (0.20) |
| Female | 0.05 (0.05) | -0.95† (0.55) | -0.06 (0.04) | -0.83† (0.46) |
| Age | -0.09** (0.02) | 0.15 (0.20) | -0.11** (0.02) | 0.34† (0.21) |
| Constant | 0.54** (0.03) | 0.32 (0.31) | 0.56** (.03) | -0.83* (0.34) |
| Number of Observations | 258 | 254 | 292 | 284 |
| R ² | 0.32 | 0.05 | 0.28 | 0.06 |

Source: 1998 Wave of the Candidate Emergence Study (Stone and Maisel 2003; Stone et al. 2004; Maestas et al. 2006). Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

**=p<0.01, *=p<0.05, †=p<0.10.

Appendix A.3: Full Sample of State Legislators (Table 3.1)

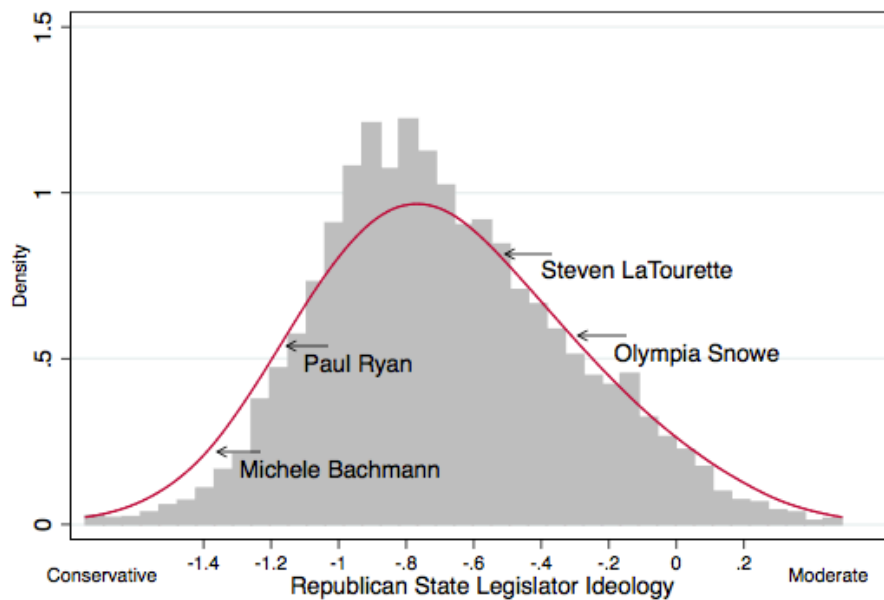
The Determinants of State Legislators' Perceived Ability to Achieve their Electoral and Policy Goals, Full Sample (With Self-Reported Ideology and Policy Positions)

| | All State Legislators | | All State Legislators | |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Chance of Winning Primary | Value of House Seat | Chance of Winning Primary | Value of House Seat |
| Self-Reported Ideology (Higher=Centrist) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.26† (0.13) | — | — |
| Policy Positions (Higher=Non-Conformist) | — | — | -0.02 (0.01) | -0.26* (0.13) |
| Favorable District Partisanship | -0.06* (0.02) | -0.03 (0.27) | -0.06** (0.03) | 0.05 (0.28) |
| Ability to Raise Money | 0.04** (0.01) | -0.22 (0.14) | 0.04** (0.01) | -0.19 (0.15) |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.06** (0.01) | 0.00 (0.13) | 0.05** (0.01) | -0.01 (0.14) |
| Terms in State Legislative Office | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.29* (0.14) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.35* (0.14) |
| Serves in Professional Legislature | 0.05** (0.01) | -0.23† (0.13) | 0.05** (0.01) | -0.22 (0.14) |
| Incumbent Strength | -0.03** (0.01) | 0.30* (0.13) | -0.03* (0.01) | 0.24† (0.14) |
| Support from Outside Groups | 0.02† (0.01) | 0.19 (0.14) | 0.03* (0.01) | 0.24† (0.14) |
| Woman | -0.02 (0.03) | -1.00** (0.32) | -0.03 (0.03) | -1.10** (0.33) |
| Age | -0.10** (0.01) | 0.27† (0.14) | -0.10** (0.01) | 0.28† (0.14) |
| Constant | 0.55** (0.02) | -0.22 (0.22) | 0.55** (0.02) | -0.21 (0.23) |
| Number of Observations | 569 | 569 | 538 | 538 |
| R ² | 0.27 | 0.06 | 0.26 | 0.06 |

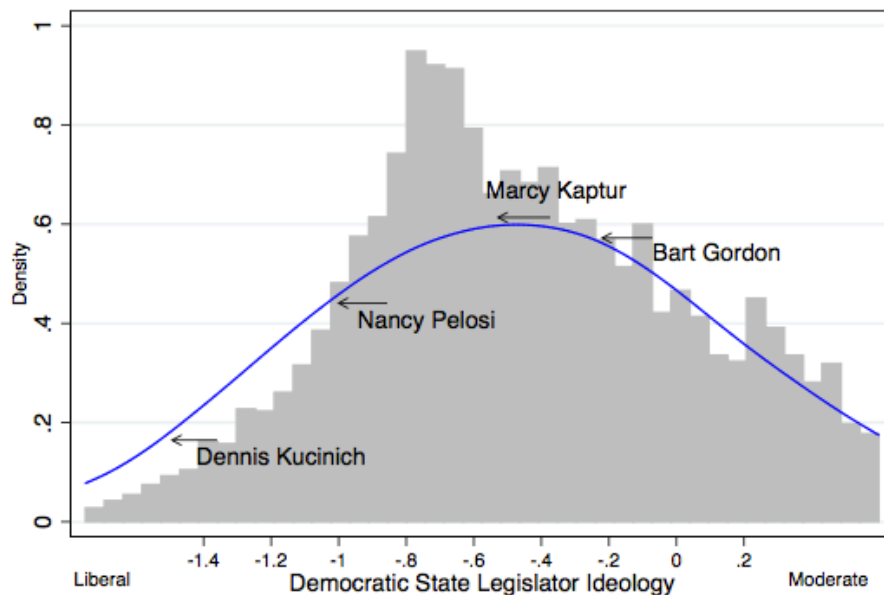
Source: 1998 Wave of the Candidate Emergence Study (Stone and Maisel 2003; Stone et al. 2004; Maestas et al. 2006). Note: Entries are OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

**=p<0.01, *=p<0.05, †=p<0.10.

Appendix A.4: Distributions of State Legislator Ideology, By Party



Note: The graph shows the ideological distribution of Republican state legislators used in Table 3.2. The arrows refer to the relative ideological placement of various former and current members of Congress.



Note: The graph shows the ideological distribution of Democratic state legislators used in Table 3.2. The arrows refer to the relative ideological placement of various former and current members of Congress.

Appendix A.5: Alternative Specifications of Party Fit (Table 3.2)

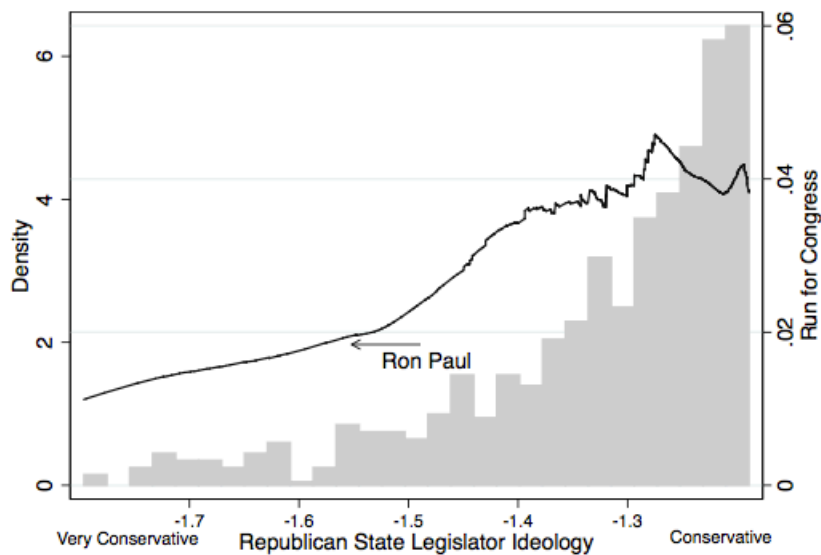
The Determinants of Running for Congress, By Party (2000-2010) (With Absolute Distance from Party Median in Congress and Relative Closeness to Own Party in Congress)

| | Republican Legislators | Democratic Legislators | Republican Legislators | Democratic Legislators |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Distance between State Legislator and Party Median in Congress (Higher=Distant) | -1.79** (0.32) | -1.14** (0.24) | — | — |
| Relative Closeness to Own Party in Congress (Higher=Closer) | — | — | 1.74** (0.20) | 1.33** (0.18) |
| Incumbent Running in Congressional District | -2.31** (0.13) | -2.41** (0.16) | -2.34** (0.13) | -2.38** (0.16) |
| Ideology of Congressional District | -1.14** (0.35) | 0.14 (0.30) | -1.80** (0.32) | 0.62 (0.33) |
| Log of Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 0.29** (0.05) | 0.34** (0.06) | 0.37** (0.05) | 0.43** (0.06) |
| Number of Times Run for State Legislature | 0.26** (0.04) | 0.23** (0.05) | 0.31** (0.04) | 0.25** (0.05) |
| Woman | -0.06 (0.17) | -0.05 (0.16) | -0.10 (0.17) | -0.24 (0.16) |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 1.54** (0.57) | 1.28 (0.71) | 1.90** (0.57) | 0.72 (0.71) |
| In State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.62** (0.14) | 1.05** (0.17) | 0.65** (0.14) | 0.97** (0.17) |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.43** (0.17) | -0.05 (0.20) | 0.68** (0.17) | -0.19 (0.22) |
| Constant | -6.49** (0.64) | -7.47** (0.73) | -10.43** (0.78) | -10.32** (0.76) |
| Number of Observations | 14,459 | 16,571 | 14,459 | 16,571 |
| Log-Likelihood | -1183.09 | -926.33 | -1139.26 | -888.29 |

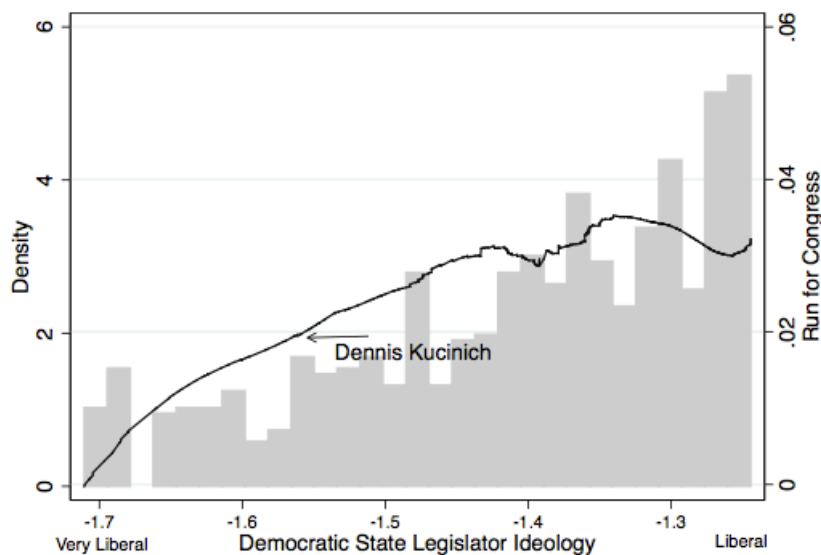
Source: State legislator estimates and party estimates are from Bonica (2013b).

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by individual in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the incumbent state legislator ran for Congress and 0 if the incumbent state legislator instead ran for the state legislature. **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

Appendix A.6: State Legislators who are Extreme Ideological Outliers, By Party

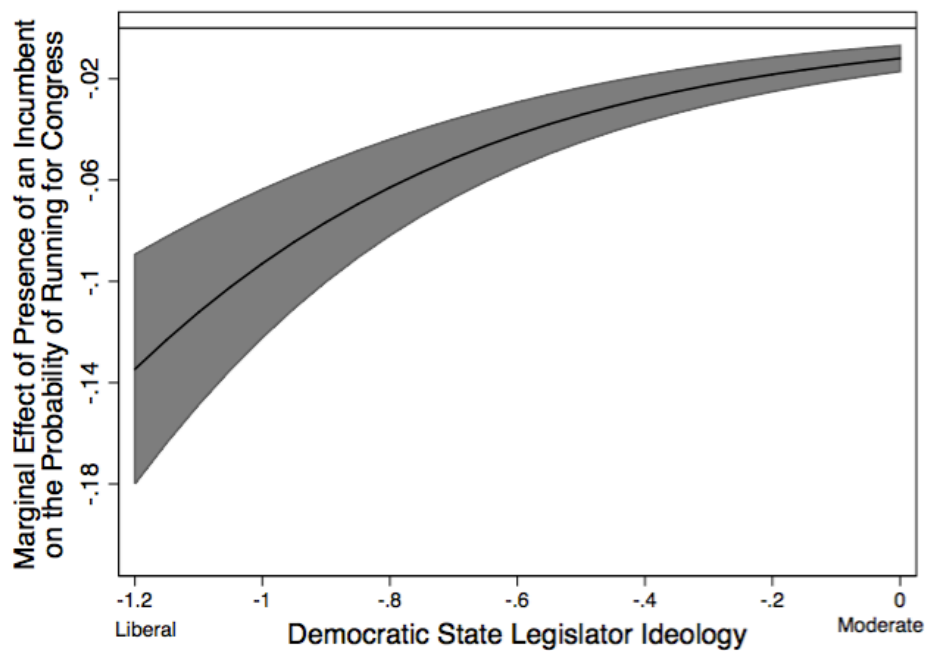
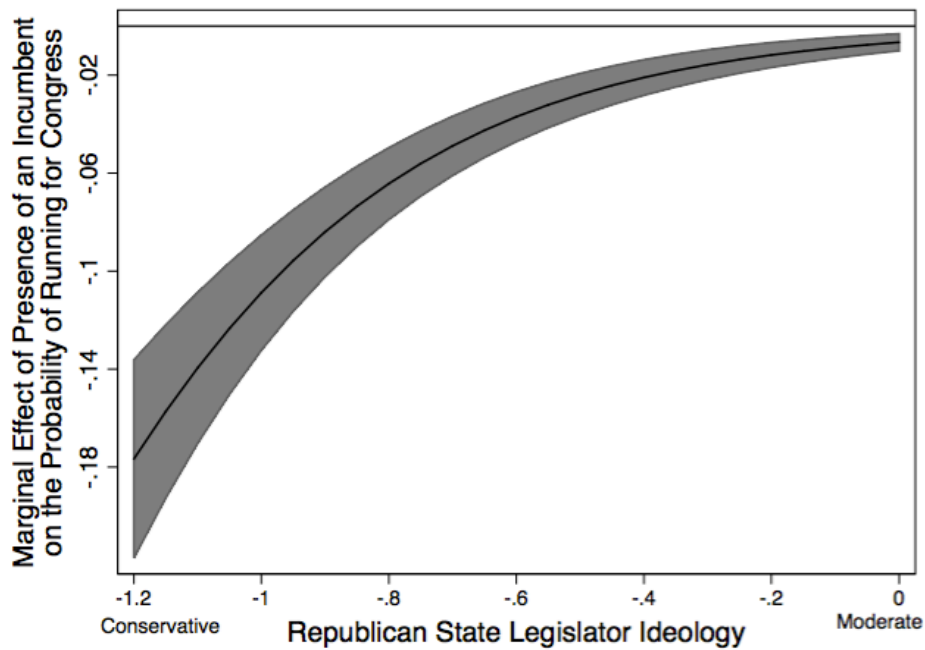


Note: The graph shows the probability of running for Congress among Republican state legislators who are ideological outliers (as conservative as Ron Paul, for example). We can see that the probability of running also decreases among very conservative state legislators, which aligns with the argument here. The state legislators in this figure comprise 6% of the sample used in the analysis in Table 3.2.



Note: The graph shows the probability of running for Congress among Democratic state legislators who are ideological outliers (as liberal as Dennis Kucinich, for example). We can see that the probability of running also decreases among very liberal state legislators, which aligns with the argument here. The state legislators in this figure comprise 5% of the sample used in the analysis in Table 3.2.

Appendix A.7: The Marginal Effect of Presence of an Incumbent on the Probability of Running for Congress, By Party



Note: The graphs show the marginal effect of the presence of an incumbent on the probability of running for Congress among Republican and Democratic state legislators. We can see that the presence of an incumbent dramatically decreases the probability of running among those at the ideological poles, but has little impact on moderates, primarily because they are not running for Congress regardless of seat type.

Appendix B: Supporting Information for Chapter 4

Appendix B.1: Summary Statistics (Republican State Legislators)

| | Mean | Median | SD | Range |
|--|-------|--------|------|---------------|
| <i>Table 4.1</i> | | | | |
| DV: Attraction to a U.S. House Seat | 0.50 | 1 | 0.50 | [0, 1] |
| Ideological Moderate | 0.30 | 0 | 0.46 | [0, 1] |
| Future Chances of Winning | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.28 | [0.01, 0.98] |
| Favorable District Partisanship | 0.57 | 1 | 0.50 | [0, 1] |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.26 | 0 | 0.66 | [0, 4] |
| Relative Value of House Seat | 0.06 | 0 | 2.94 | [-10, 9] |
| Terms in Office | 2.34 | 2 | 1.03 | [1, 4] |
| Serves in Professional Legislature | 2.72 | 3 | 1.38 | [1, 5] |
| Faces Term Limits | 0.33 | 0 | 0.47 | [0, 1] |
| Campaign Cost Index | 2.37 | 2.5 | 0.79 | [1, 4] |
| Family Cost Index | 2.14 | 2 | 0.75 | [1, 4] |
| Woman | 0.14 | 0 | 0.35 | [0, 1] |
| Age | 3.89 | 4 | 1.32 | [1, 6] |
| Risk Acceptant | 0.14 | 0 | 0.34 | [0, 1] |
| Personal Motivations | 3.39 | 3.33 | 1.26 | [1, 7] |
| <i>Table 4.2</i> | | | | |
| DV: Run for Congress | 0.03 | 0 | 0.16 | [0, 1] |
| State Legislator Ideology | -0.67 | -0.73 | 0.38 | [-1.94, 1.75] |
| Woman | 0.17 | 0 | 0.37 | [0, 1] |
| Liberal Congressional District | 0.11 | 0.15 | 0.20 | [-0.85, 0.49] |
| Incumbent Running in District | 0.88 | 1 | 0.32 | [0, 1] |
| South | 0.26 | 0 | 0.44 | [0, 1] |
| Majority-Minority Congressional District | 0.05 | 0 | 0.21 | [0, 1] |
| Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 10.83 | 10.82 | 1.22 | [6.45, 15.04] |
| Times Sought State Legislative Office | 3.63 | 3 | 1.57 | [2, 10] |
| Professionalized State Legislature | 0.19 | 0.17 | 0.11 | [0.03, 0.63] |
| State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.25 | 0 | 0.43 | [0, 1] |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.42 | 0.38 | 0.41 | [0, 1] |

Appendix B.1: Summary Statistics (Democratic State Legislators)

| | Mean | Median | SD | Range |
|--|-------|--------|------|---------------|
| <i>Table 4.1</i> | | | | |
| DV: Attraction to a House Seat | 0.51 | 1 | 0.50 | [0, 1] |
| Ideological Moderate | 0.73 | 1 | 0.44 | [0, 1] |
| Future Chances of Winning | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.28 | [0.01, 0.98] |
| Favorable District Partisanship | 0.62 | 1 | 0.49 | [0, 1] |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.32 | 0 | 0.76 | [0, 4] |
| Relative Value of House Seat | -0.96 | -1 | 3.16 | [-12, 9] |
| Terms in Office | 2.47 | 2.5 | 1.18 | [1, 4] |
| Serves in Professional Legislature | 2.63 | 2 | 1.33 | [1, 5] |
| Faces Term Limits | 0.32 | 0 | 0.47 | [0, 1] |
| Campaign Cost Index | 2.67 | 2.5 | 0.85 | [1, 4] |
| Family Cost Index | 2.20 | 2 | 0.85 | [1, 4] |
| Woman | 0.29 | 0 | 0.45 | [0, 1] |
| Age | 3.65 | 4 | 1.20 | [1, 6] |
| Risk Acceptant | 0.14 | 0 | 0.34 | [0, 1] |
| Personal Motivations | 3.41 | 3.33 | 1.07 | [1, 6.33] |
| <i>Table 4.2</i> | | | | |
| DV: Run for Congress | 0.02 | 0 | 0.13 | [0, 1] |
| State Legislator Ideology | -0.49 | -0.57 | 0.54 | [-1.99, 1.29] |
| Woman | 0.28 | 0 | 0.45 | [0, 1] |
| Liberal Congressional District | -0.09 | -0.09 | 0.29 | [-1.09, 0.49] |
| Incumbent Running in District | 0.90 | 1 | 0.29 | [0, 1] |
| South | 0.23 | 0 | 0.42 | [0, 1] |
| Majority-Minority Congressional District | 0.22 | 0 | 0.41 | [0, 1] |
| Receipts Raised as State Legislator | 10.83 | 10.81 | 1.18 | [5.59, 15.45] |
| Times Sought State Legislative Office | 3.76 | 3 | 1.66 | [2, 11] |
| Professionalized State Legislature | 0.21 | 0.19 | 0.12 | [0.03, 0.63] |
| State Legislature with Term Limits | 0.20 | 0 | 0.40 | [0, 1] |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | 0.62 | 0.75 | 0.40 | [0, 1] |

Appendix B.2: The Determinants of State Legislators' Attraction to a Career in the U.S. House, Full Sample and With Moderate Woman Interaction (Table 4.1)

| | | With Moderate Woman Interaction | | |
|---|-------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Full Sample | Full Sample | Republicans | Democrats |
| Ideological Moderate (Self-Reported Ideology) | -0.49* (0.22) | -0.54* (0.25) | -0.81* (0.39) | -0.73 (0.47) |
| Ideological Moderate x Woman | — | 0.23 (0.52) | 0.59 (1.01) | 0.38 (0.72) |
| Woman | -0.30 (0.26) | -0.40 (0.35) | -0.34 (0.56) | -0.68 (0.57) |
| Future Chances of Winning | 2.07** (0.42) | 2.07** (0.42) | 2.76** (0.67) | 1.87** (0.59) |
| Favorable District Partisanship | 0.11 (0.22) | 0.12 (0.22) | -0.50 (0.35) | 0.57 (0.31) |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.47** (0.18) | 0.48** (0.18) | 0.61* (0.31) | 0.48* (0.23) |
| Relative Value of House Seat | 0.07 (0.04) | 0.07 (0.04) | 0.04 (0.06) | 0.08 (0.05) |
| Terms in Office | 0.10 (0.10) | 0.10 (0.10) | 0.08 (0.16) | 0.17 (0.15) |
| Serves in Professional Legislature | -0.11 (0.08) | -0.11 (0.08) | -0.01 (0.13) | -0.22 (0.12) |
| Faces Term Limits | 0.15 (0.23) | 0.15 (0.23) | -0.15 (0.36) | 0.52 (0.33) |
| Campaign Cost Index | -0.25 (0.15) | -0.25 (0.15) | -0.08 (0.24) | -0.39 (0.20) |
| Family Cost Index | -0.56** (0.15) | -0.56** (0.15) | -0.66** (0.24) | -0.52* (0.21) |
| Age | -0.69** (0.10) | -0.70** (0.10) | -0.70** (0.15) | -0.69** (0.15) |
| Risk Acceptant | -0.13 (0.31) | -0.13 (0.31) | -0.39 (0.46) | 0.12 (0.45) |
| Personal Motivations | 0.26** (0.10) | 0.26** (0.10) | 0.11 (0.14) | 0.43** (0.15) |
| Constant | 3.08** (0.80) | 3.10** (0.80) | 3.34** (1.25) | 2.89** (1.20) |
| Number of Observations | 538 | 538 | 258 | 280 |
| Log Likelihood | -273.22 | -273.12 | -123.60 | -141.19 |

Source: Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone et al. 2004).

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is 1 if the legislator is attracted to a career in the U.S. House and 0 if not. **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

Appendix B.3: The Determinants of State Legislators' Attraction to a Career in the U.S. House, With Legislator Ideology Measured as Policy Preferences (Table 4.1)

| | Full Sample | Republicans | Democrats | Republicans (Women's Issues) |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Ideological Moderate (On Policy Issues) | -0.54* (0.23) | -0.76* (0.32) | -0.49 (0.38) | -0.66 (0.43) |
| Woman | -0.40 (0.26) | -0.05 (0.45) | -0.64 (0.36) | -0.02 (0.45) |
| Future Chances of Winning | 2.14** (0.43) | 2.76** (0.65) | 1.87** (0.63) | 2.60** (0.64) |
| Favorable District Partisanship | 0.33 (0.22) | -0.19 (0.33) | 0.83** (0.32) | -0.21 (0.32) |
| Contacted by Political Party | 0.39** (0.19) | 0.39 (0.31) | 0.49* (0.25) | 0.47 (0.31) |
| Relative Value of House Seat | 0.10*** (0.04) | 0.12* (0.06) | 0.07 (0.05) | 0.12* (0.06) |
| Terms in Office | 0.14 (0.10) | 0.25 (0.16) | 0.09 (0.15) | 0.21 (0.16) |
| Serves in Professional Legislature | -0.04 (0.08) | 0.06 (0.12) | -0.16 (0.12) | 0.07 (0.12) |
| Faces Term Limits | 0.03 (0.23) | -0.26 (0.34) | 0.37 (0.35) | -0.28 (0.34) |
| Campaign Cost Index | -0.30** (0.15) | -0.02 (0.23) | -0.55** (0.21) | -0.04 (0.34) |
| Family Cost Index | -0.32** (0.14) | -0.41 (0.22) | -0.27 (0.20) | -0.46* (0.22) |
| Age | -0.53*** (0.10) | -0.49** (0.14) | -0.58** (0.15) | -0.50** (0.14) |
| Risk Acceptant | 0.10 (0.31) | -0.07 (0.44) | 0.41 (0.47) | -0.07 (0.44) |
| Personal Motivations | 0.28*** (0.10) | 0.13 (0.14) | 0.49** (0.16) | 0.09 (0.13) |
| Constant | 2.18*** (0.79) | 1.72 (1.16) | 2.40* (1.19) | 2.31 (1.20) |
| Number of Observations | 536 | 259 | 277 | 260 |
| Log Likelihood | -276.43 | -130.04 | -136.10 | -131.86 |

Source: Candidate Emergence Study (Maestas et al. 2006; Stone et al. 2004).

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is 1 if the legislator is attracted to a career in the U.S. House and 0 if not. **=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

Notes for Appendix B.3:

Ideological Moderate is a dummy variable created from respondents' positions on four policy issues: school vouchers, environmental regulations, affirmative action, and states' control over domestic programs. Respondents are coded as moderate if they are indifferent, somewhat oppose, oppose, or strongly oppose the position in their party's platform on at least one of the four issues and ideologues if they favor their party's position on all four issues. Although the results are robust to a variety of combinations of respondents' policy positions, these policies were selected for three main reasons. First, they are addressed in both the Republican and Democratic national party platforms. Second, results from a factor analysis suggest that the four variables load highly on the same dimension. The third and more practical reason is that these questions had the lowest number of missing observations, which is especially important because of the split-sample (party-specific) design used here.

Ideological Moderate (on Women's Issues) is a dummy variable created from respondents' positions on education funding and abortion rights. Again, respondents are coded as moderate if they are indifferent, somewhat oppose, oppose, or strongly oppose the position in their party's platform on at least one of these and ideologues if they favor their party's position on both.

Appendix B.4: The Determinants of Running for Congress, By Party and Region (Table 4.2)

| | South | | Northeast | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| | Republican State Legislators | Democratic State Legislators | Republican State Legislators | Democratic State Legislators |
| State Legislator Ideology (Higher=Moderate) | -5.48** (0.80) | -3.12** (0.46) | -3.07** (0.79) | -4.06** (0.88) |
| Woman | -0.24 (0.31) | -0.52 (0.32) | -0.40 (0.51) | -0.76 (0.43) |
| Liberal Congressional District | -3.91** (1.05) | 0.55 (1.04) | 1.59 (1.32) | 6.25** (1.90) |
| Incumbent Running in Congressional District | -2.22** (0.22) | -2.18** (0.34) | -3.00** (0.36) | -2.39** (0.35) |
| Majority-Minority Congressional District | -1.90* (0.77) | 0.81 (0.47) | 3.49** (1.08) | 1.66 (1.03) |
| Log of Mean Receipts Raised as State Legislator | -0.14 (0.14) | 0.01 (0.24) | 0.15 (0.25) | 0.43 (0.24) |
| Number of Times Run for State Legislature | 0.33** (0.11) | 0.30* (0.15) | 0.15 (0.16) | 0.21 (0.18) |
| In Professionalized State Legislature | 0.58 (4.60) | 1.01 (4.18) | 5.95* (2.40) | 4.94** (1.79) |
| Democratic Control of State Legislature | -0.19 (0.43) | 0.17 (0.47) | 2.39** (0.89) | -0.02 (0.93) |
| In State Legislature with Term Limits | 2.37** (0.44) | 2.00** (0.43) | 0.87 (0.86) | -0.64 (0.72) |
| Constant | -6.12** (1.80) | -5.98* (2.83) | -8.04* (3.51) | -12.37** (3.94) |
| Number of Observations | 3409 | 3451 | 2346 | 4114 |
| Log-Likelihood | -358.40 | -218.97 | -176.53 | -195.43 |

Source: State legislator estimates from Bonica (2013).

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by individual in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the incumbent state legislator ran for Congress and 0 if the incumbent legislator instead ran for the state legislature. The model includes year fixed effects.

**=p<0.01, *=p<0.05.

Appendix C: Supporting Information for Chapter 5

Appendix C.1: Descriptive Statistics

| | Mean | Median | SD | Range |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|---------------|
| <i>Republican MCs</i> | | | | |
| DV: Leave House chamber | 0.10 | 0 | 0.30 | [0, 1] |
| Member Ideology (Higher=Moderate) | -0.44 | -0.44 | 0.19 | [-1.32, 0.10] |
| Woman | 0.08 | 0 | 0.26 | [0, 1] |
| Age | 52 | 52 | 10.03 | [27, 86] |
| Took a Term Limits Pledge | 0.10 | 0 | 0.30 | [0, 1] |
| Involvement in a Scandal | 0.04 | 0 | 0.20 | [0, 1] |
| Previous Vote Share | 0.68 | 0.66 | 0.14 | [0.50, 1] |
| Hostile Redistricting | 0.02 | 0 | 0.14 | [0, 1] |
| Committee Chair | 0.04 | 0 | 0.20 | [0, 1] |
| Party Leader | 0.01 | 0 | 0.11 | [0, 1] |
| Removed from Chair Position | 0.01 | 0 | 0.09 | [0, 1] |
| Denied Chair Despite Seniority | 0.01 | 0 | 0.09 | [0, 1] |
| <i>Democratic MCs</i> | | | | |
| DV: Leave House chamber | 0.08 | 0 | 0.27 | [0, 1] |
| Member Ideology (Higher=Moderate) | -0.35 | -0.35 | 0.17 | [-0.78, 0.88] |
| Woman | 0.13 | 0 | 0.33 | [0, 1] |
| Age | 53.16 | 53 | 10.45 | [27, 88] |
| Took a Term Limits Pledge | 0.01 | 0 | 0.11 | [0, 1] |
| Involvement in a Scandal | 0.07 | 0 | 0.26 | [0, 1] |
| Previous Vote Share | 0.72 | 0.69 | 0.15 | [0.50, 1] |
| Hostile Redistricting | 0.02 | 0 | 0.15 | [0, 1] |
| Committee Chair | 0.05 | 0 | 0.23 | [0, 1] |
| Party Leader | 0.01 | 0 | 0.10 | [0, 1] |
| Removed from Chair Position | 0 | 0 | 0.04 | [0, 1] |
| Denied Chair Despite Seniority | 0 | 0 | 0.04 | [0, 1] |

**Appendix C.2: The Determinants of Member Retirement, By Party (1981-2010)
(With Ideology x Gender Interaction)**

| | Republican MCs | Democratic MCs |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Member Ideology (Higher=Moderate) | 1.02** (0.41) | 1.30*** (0.39) |
| Woman | -0.05 (0.47) | 0.10 (0.48) |
| Member Ideology x Gender | -0.17 (1.08) | 1.94 (1.22) |
| Age | 0.03*** (0.01) | 0.04*** (0.01) |
| Took a Term Limits Pledge | 0.74*** (0.20) | 0.45 (0.45) |
| Involvement in a Scandal | 1.38*** (0.33) | 0.69** (0.32) |
| Previous Vote Share | -0.42 (0.51) | 0.19 (0.45) |
| Hostile Redistricting | 0.41 (0.39) | 0.88*** (0.33) |
| Committee Chair | 0.39 (0.30) | -0.90** (0.36) |
| Party Leader | -0.33 (0.43) | -0.45 (0.85) |
| Removed from Chair Position | 1.29*** (0.50) | 1.19 (0.78) |
| Denied Chair Despite Seniority | 1.12** (0.47) | 0.92 (0.89) |
| Constant | -2.95*** (0.58) | -4.22*** (0.52) |
| Number of Observations | 3,001 | 3,534 |
| Log-Likelihood | -927.97 | -882.94 |

Note: Entries are logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by individual in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the member of Congress voluntarily left the House chamber and 0 otherwise. Congress fixed effects are included in both of the models.

***=p<001., **=p<0.05, *=p<0.10.

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